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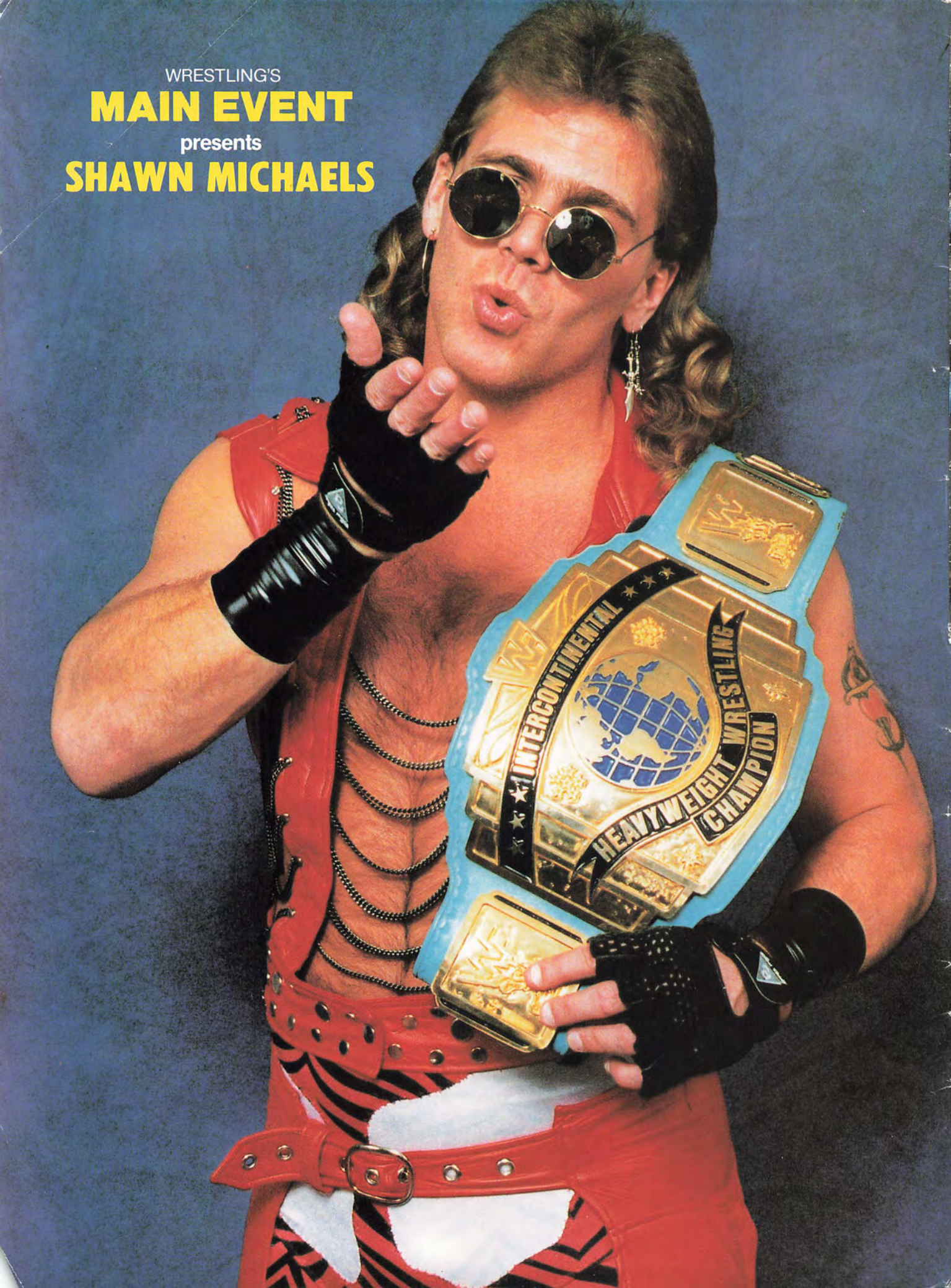

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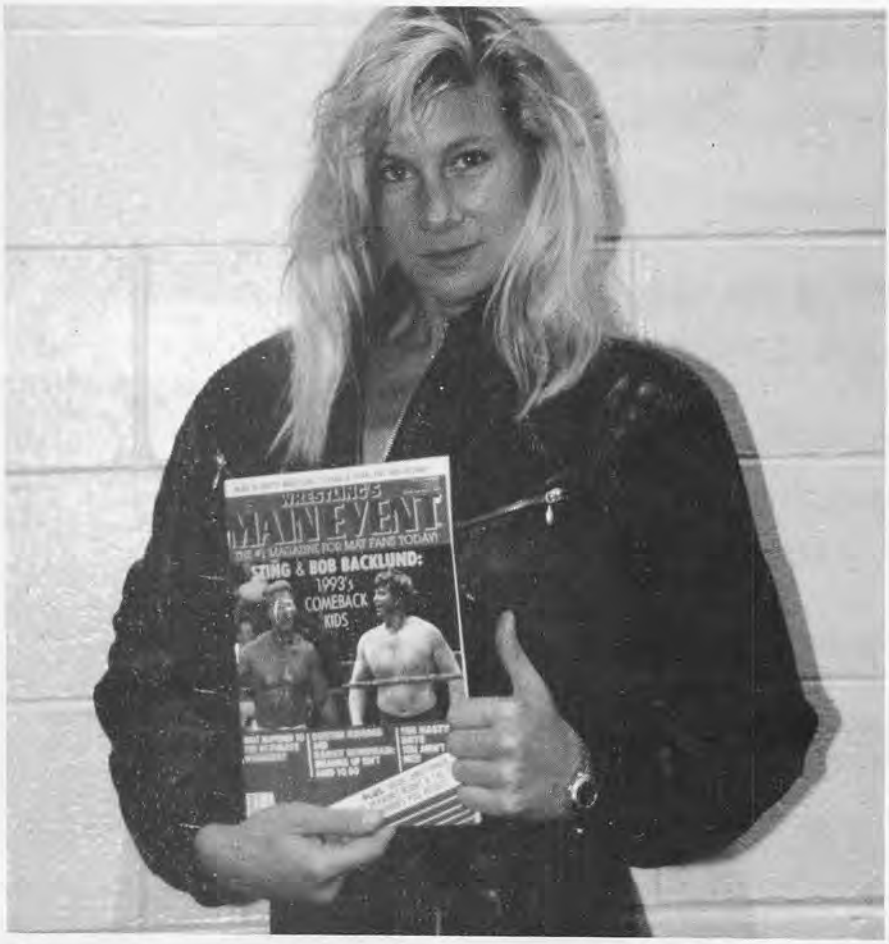

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Questions that need to be asked, but probably won't ever be answered...

With all the ex-AWA'ers now appearing in WCW, such as Greg Gagne, Tom Zenk, Scott Norton (who's already left), Larry Zbyszko and Nailz (Kevin Kelly), does this mean WCW is about to go out of business, as well??...Does anyone in WCW management have a clue?? I mean they let Robbie V. and Shane Douglas go and keep men such as Van Hammer, Tex Slashinger and The Cole Twins?? By the way why do the fans in CNN Center like ole Tex so much??... Don't the promoters have any respect for the fans?? I mean when they do a PPV, shouldn't at least some of the matches be different than those that can be seen in the arenas every night of the week?? PPV's cost more than arena tickets, guys, there's only so much money to go around, and your buy-rates aren't too hot right now. Get creative, people!...How am I supposed to make people take wrestling seriously when the WWF has clowns and characters too ridiculous to mention wrestling regularly?? This is supposed to be athletics, McMahon, not a cartoon show. It's been ten years now, your product is going into the dumper and you still haven't learned, either that or you're too pig-headed to listen to your ex-fans and the rattling of the wind against empty seats in the arenas your performers go to...By the way McMahon, back in 1984 when you were running all the regional promoters out of business, did you ever stop to think where your stars of the future would come from?? Did you think they'd grow on trees?? So *where* are your stars of the future going to come from?? Those you have tried to create, stink...Hey, Rick and Scott Steiner, aren't you guys really glad you turned down a guaranteed salary in WCW to go to the WWF?? The Smoking Guns are getting more title shots than you guys are...Why is it that, outside the ring, the rulebreakers are the nice guys and the fan favorites are such jerks?? I'm just curious about things like this, ya know??...Say, Jerry Lawler, how can you praise Papa Shango on WWF television one day and be on USWA television the next day putting him down?? And, Jerry, just what is your purpose for being in the WWF?? It surely isn't to wrestle, because you don't do that too often for them...Hey, Jake Roberts, why did you almost start a war with Mexico when you cost Konnan El Barbaro his loser-leaves-town match against Cien Caras?? You would have been killed if you hadn't hid out in the rulebreakers' dressing room for *five* hours after the AAA card was over...Whatever happened to The Patriot anyway?? He's a big star in Japan, but he can't get a job here in the U.S... SportsChannel New York features GWF, IWCCW and IWF wrestling weekly. Isn't there something better out there to spend an hour of TV time on?? How about Smoky Mountain or USWA?? The three promotions SCNY features don't deserve the major exposure New York television can give them because they don't try hard enough to make themselves good promotions...By the way, ECW would be a good choice, as well. Philadelphia fans think it's the hottest promotion going today...Bill Watts, aren't you sorry you didn't keep your mouth shut and your personal opinions about women, Jews and blacks in your narrow-mind, instead of broadcasting them all over CNN Center?? ...Isn't it a shame to see Jim Ross huckstering the Hulkster every week on WWF television?? And, in that vein, just why does Eric Bischoff have any job in wrestling?? Is he blackmailing someone at TBS?? He's simply awful...Well, I guess that's enough for questions that aren't going to get answered this time. Enjoy the rest of the issue. —S.K.

What happened to The Patriot? That question, as well as others that won't be answered, are asked in this column.

PHOTO BY JO ELLEN HALLMARK

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE ABSOLUTE LAST WORD ON WRESTLEMANIA

I'm pretty ticked off at Hulk Hogan. With the way everything is going, it seems to me that Hogan, Yokozuna and Vince McMahon are all in cahoots with each other. I used to have a bit of respect for Hogan, but now that's history. No one has held that belt with more pride than "Hit Man" Bret Hart. Bret defended that belt more times than any other champion in the history of the federation.

I've never seen a wrestler with more determination and dedication to the sport than Bret. It's people like him that make watching wrestling worthwhile and help keep the sport going—not clowns like Yokozuna and Hogan. As far as I'm concerned Bret Hart will always be a fighting champion and I'll always be in his corner, rooting him on!

Lisa Peters
Charlottetown, P.E.I.

It was great to see Hulk Hogan win the WWF Championship for an unprecedented fifth time at WrestleMania IX. Bret "The Hit Man" Hart may have "excellence of execution", but he's no Hulk Hogan by any stretch of the imagination. I thought Hart's WWF World Title reign was less than thrilling and I was actually glad when Yokozuna squashed him. "The Hit Man" had a tough time with Yokozuna, but Hogan put the 505 lb. monster down for the three count in mere seconds. Obviously, Hulkamania is still the strongest force in the WWF. I hope to see the long-awaited showdown between Hulk Hogan and Lex Luger in the not-too-distant future.

Mike Facciani
Johnstown, PA.

WRESTLING, NOT MOVIES, HULK!

First, I'd like to let you know that I am the #1 Hulkamaniac. I have met you many times and you have always been nice to me, and for that I would like to thank you.

But I have a problem, I, and all of the other Hulkamaniacs, want you to make a decision: either stay in wrestling or do movies.

The way you are acting now is ridiculous! First you're in the WWF, then Hollywood, then you come back at WrestleMania 9—you are in one match, then it's off to Hollywood again.

The WWF isn't the same without you, it needs you badly, but it needs you full-time, not part-time.

So please, Hulk, make a decision and make the *right* one.

Your fans want to see you in the ring, not on the movie screen. You must know that, just look how badly your movies have done at the box office. Wake up Hulk, Hollywood is *not* where you belong!

David Rodriguez
Beverly, MA.

DEAR AL

I disagree with Al McGiness 100% about Mr. Perfect turning on Ric Flair and Bobby "Weasel" Heenan. I think it was the best move that he could've made. I hope that he one day wrestles "the Weasel". I'll bet that if "the Weasel" had his way, Mr. Perfect would *never* wrestle in the WWF again.

Erin Pryor
Elmira, N.Y.

A NEW STAR ON THE HORIZON

I am writing to my favorite wrestling magazine asking you to do a story on my favorite wrestler, Alex Porteau.

Alex wrestles in the Global Wrestling Federation. He is a fantastic, up-and-coming wrestler, who has a great future ahead of him. Alex is tearing up the competition in Global. I, for one, would like to see an article featuring this mat star, not to mention, Alex is one fantastic looking guy!

Thank you for your great magazine, also can you tell me where I can write to Alex?

Dani Aguilera
Omaha, NE.

(ed. note: Dani, you can write to Alex, c/o The Sportatorium, 1000 S. Industrial Blvd., Dallas, TX. 75207.)

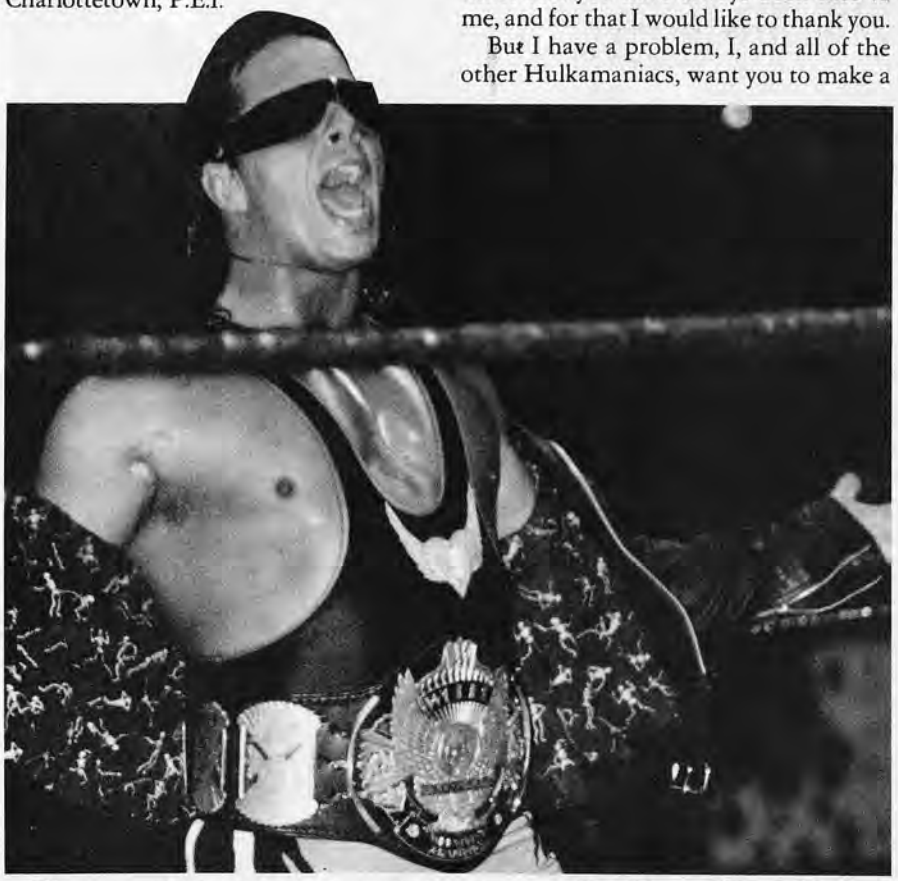

PHOTO BY RICH NIEVES

There are mixed emotions about what happened to Bret Hart at WrestleMania.

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WCW
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PAUL ORNDORFF:

The Most "Wonderful" Comeback Ever

By BOB SMITH

In 1986, "Mr. Wonderful" Paul Orndorff was one of the five biggest stars in the wrestling world. By 1992, Orndorff was considered finished by more than a few wrestling experts. But today, Orndorff is the WCW TV Champion, and he's wrestling better than he has in years. What brought about this most unlikely of comebacks?

In 1986, Paul Orndorff wrestled Hulk Hogan throughout the United States and Canada, drawing some of the biggest houses in modern wrestling history.

In 1991, Paul Orndorff wrestled Bob Backlund in Tamaqua, Pennsylvania in front of less than 600 fans in a small high school gym.

In any field, professionals age, and when they do, things are sometimes never the same. Times change, and only the best change with them. The Rolling Stones, a top rock group of the '60s, can still fill football stadiums with rabid fans. But does anyone know where The Animals, who used to chase the Stones up and down the charts, are anymore—and does anybody care?

For a few years, Orndorff, who still proudly wore the words "Mr. Wonderful" on his expensive ring robes, had disappeared from the sport entirely. In fact, around 1989, one of the hottest rumors around was that Orndorff had, in fact, died, and various reasons, most of them far-fetched and quite ridiculous, were given for the cause of his "death".

"I am not dead!" Orndorff roared, and told several media outlets that he was happy as a successful businessman in Georgia, the owner and operator of recreation and bowling centers. However, something kept eating at Orndorff, as much as he was enjoying his post-mat career.

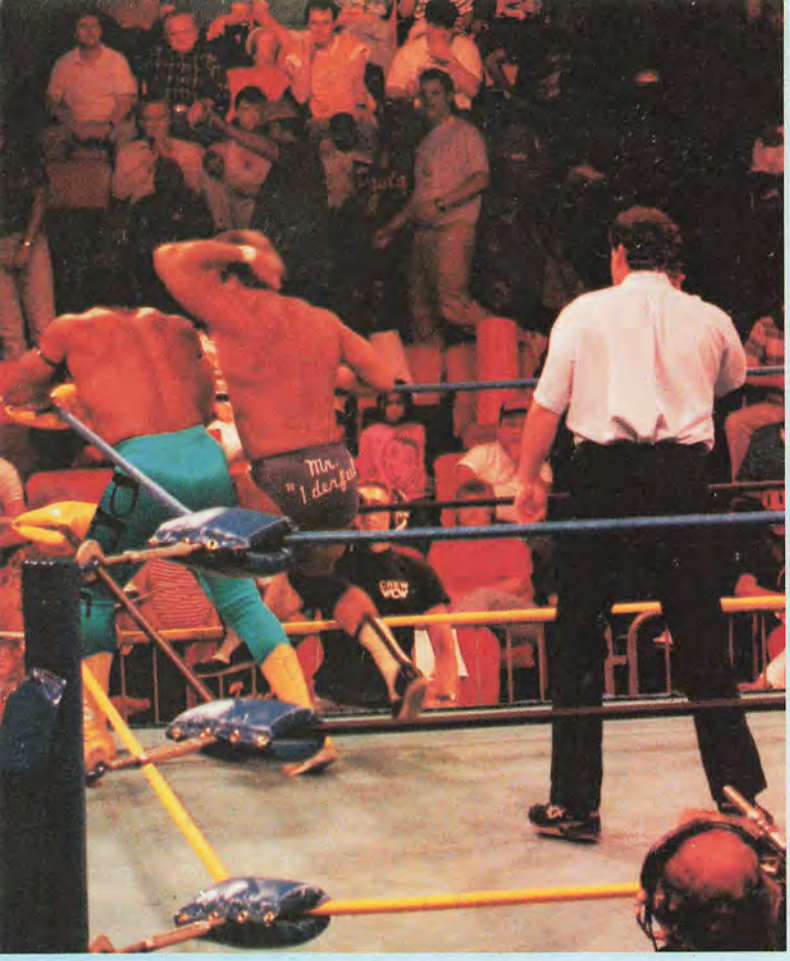
He knew he was as fine a wrestler as ever, but he had a long, *long* way to go to prove it.

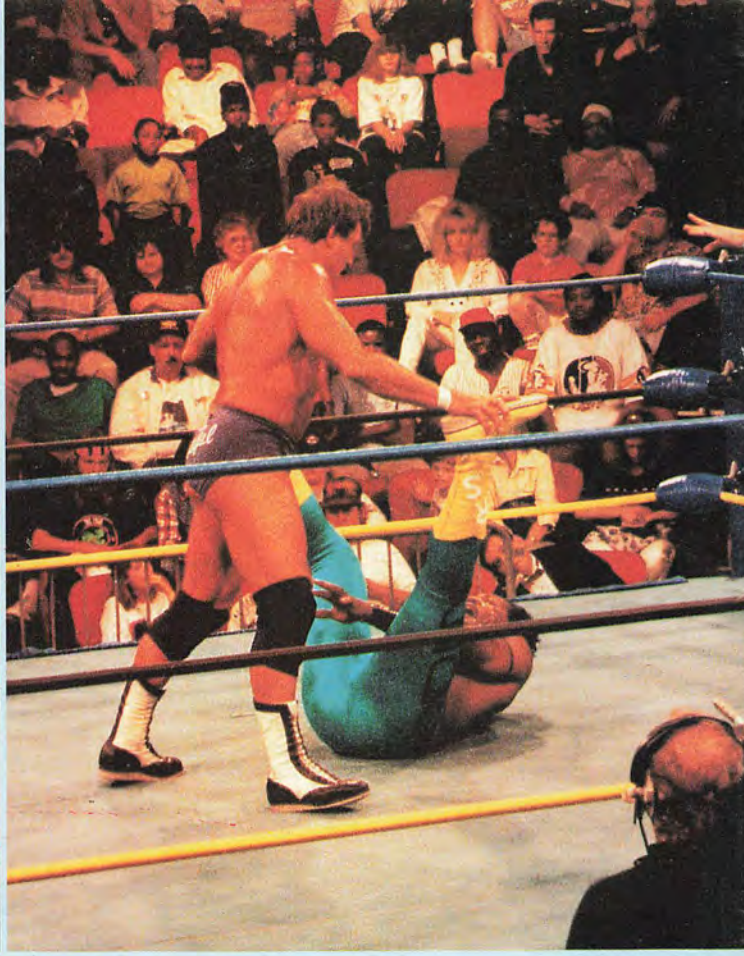
After about three years of inactivity, Orndorff decided to take on a match here and there, just to show the crowds that he was still in fine condition. In fact, he'd been active for most of two decades, and how many athletes have been able to

Orndorff smashes Dustin Rhodes head-first into a ringside barricade.

Paul tries to further injure Rhodes' shoulder.

Orndorff takes a chair to Cactus Jack's injured knee.





Orndorff has been holding off Ron Simmons' challenges for the TV Title.

PHOTOS BY RICH NIEVES, JO ELLEN HALLMARK, DENNIS BRENT and SEAN O'LEARY

maintain the excellent kind of physique that Orndorff displayed? He was determined to show everyone that he was still a main-event caliber competitor.

In many ways, Orndorff did just that; it's just that he did it in front of very few people. He took on Tully Blanchard, Backlund, even Rick Rude during the "Ravishing" one's hiatus from WCW and the WWF. Always, Orndorff proved he was as quick, powerful, and cagey as he's ever been, and in some cases, an even better wrestler than during his WWF days; he was using his wealth of experience to defeat both veterans and young stars.

Paul rocks Simmons with a punch to the side of the face.

Finally a break came in 1990—sort of. Orndorff returned to WCW, this time as a fan favorite, for some reason. He even decided to join Sting's ill-advised band of scientific stars called The Dudes With Attitude. The idea was to form an organization that could beat The Four Horsemen and drive them from the federation. Guess who was the first man to quit the Dudes?

"Worst move I ever made," said Orndorff upon his 1993 return to WCW, and in retrospect, it was. As part of a faceless group, Orndorff was consigned to opening matches against unimportant opponents. This was not the full-scale comeback that Orndorff envisioned.

Instead, Orndorff went back to the bushes, but this time, things were different. He turned to rulebreaking again, but without a manager or advisor. He not only defeated the young hopefuls that indie promoters put up against him, but he butchered them. And when Harley Race contacted Orndorff earlier this year and let "Mr. Wonderful" know that there was a spot available in the organization, Orndorff rushed to accept the opportunity.

He certainly has made the most of it. After a rocky first few weeks that included a defeat at the hands of Dustin Rhodes, Orndorff began consulting Race and his protege, World Champion "Big" Van Vader, for advice on life in modern WCW. Their teachings were simple: Get in there and cripple, and if you can't cripple, cheat as much as possible.

That's exactly what Orndorff has been up to in recent months. He captured the WCW TV Championship from Erik Watts in a tournament final marred by some of the most vile tactics that Orndorff has ever used. Since then, he's been among the most in-demand grapplers in the sport. He's even formed a partnership with Rick Rude—his former WWF enemy—and together they scored an impressive victory over Kensuke Sasaki and Dustin Rhodes at Slamboree '93.

Sometimes, athletes do make comebacks, but what caused Orndorff to come back so far that his name can now be mentioned in the same breath as Rude as a true superstar?

"I talked to Paul about two years ago, and I know what he was going through," said a star of the now-defunct Tri-State Wrestling Association in Philadelphia who now competes in ECW. The star requested anonymity because he was revealing a personal conversation. "Paul told me that although he was happy away from the sport, he'd never be able to live with himself if he didn't return to a major federation and win another title. He took

Orndorff is more aggressive than he was in his prime.

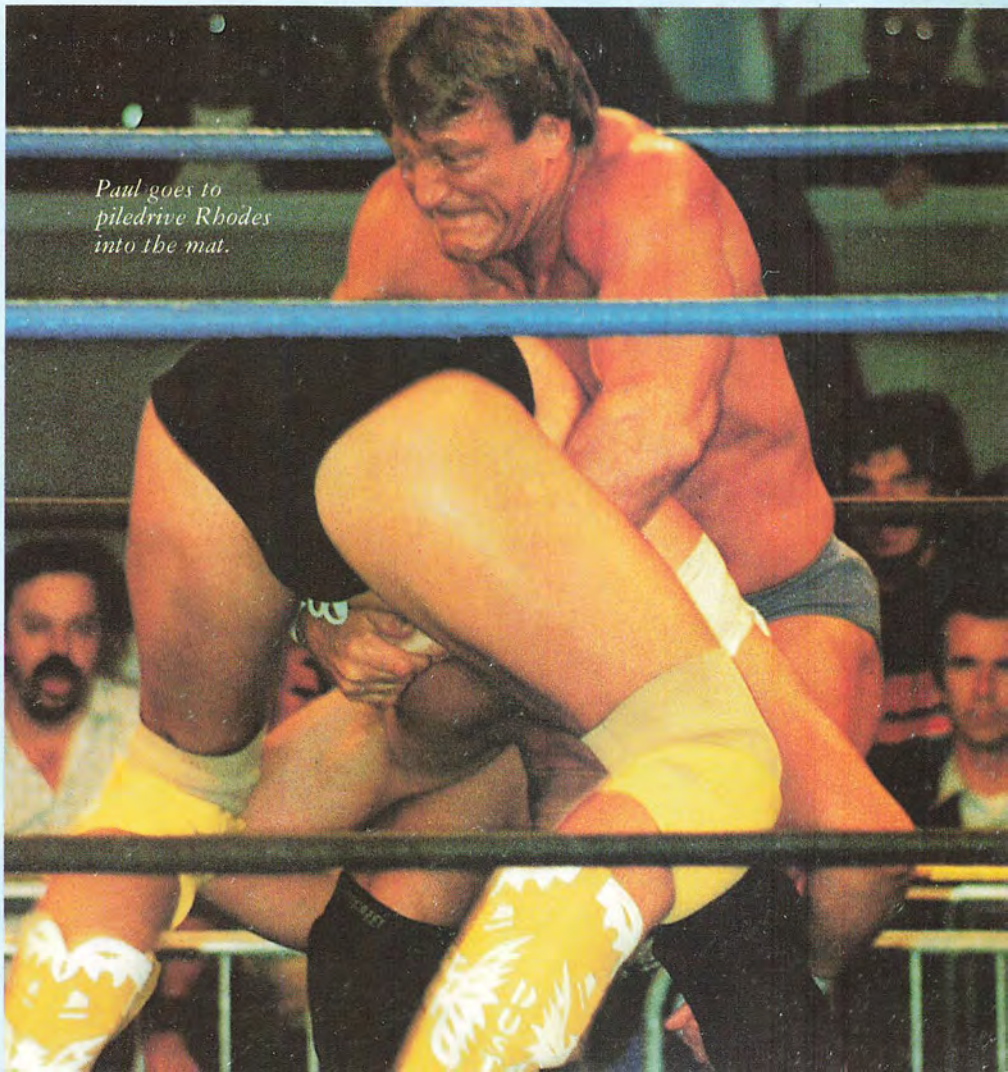
his robe off and showed me his physique, and I had to agree with him. How many people of any age look as good as Orndorff does—or compete like he does? Even in 1990, I just knew the guy would be a major star someday. You can't keep a hall-of-famer down, and that's just what Orndorff is going to be someday."

"This has got to rank as one of the greatest comebacks of the year, if not ever," said impressed veteran WCW commentator, Gordon Solie, recently. "I don't like his tactics, but there's very little difference between the Orndorff of '93 and the Orndorff of '86. He's as quick and powerful as he was then, and he's just as scary as Vader is sometimes. I hate it when the fans call him 'Paula', because when they do, he goes crazy."

Just like in the old days. In fact, there are rumblings in WCW that Orndorff is about to ask for—and perhaps receive—the opportunity of a lifetime. He's petitioning WCW officials for the chance to wrestle Sting, the league's most popular star and established standardbearer. Orndorff knows that if he can defeat the war-painted fan favorite, he will be truly on top of the wrestling world again.

It's been eight years since Paul Orndorff enjoyed the finest year of his career. However, it's entirely possible that the most productive year of a brilliant career is still to come.

"Wonderful" for Orndorff. Bad news for every fan favorite in WCW.■



Paul goes to piledrive Rhodes into the mat.

RITISH

Is Davey Boy Smith Man Enough To Beat Vader?

By Al McGINESS

Davey Boy Smith gave "Big" Van Vader all he could handle at Slamboree '93. He certainly wasn't afraid of the WCW World Heavyweight Champion, but does he have the skill and power to win the belt?

Nobody in WCW has been able to derail the freight train that is WCW World Heavyweight Champion, "Big" Van Vader. Many a man has tried, most of them ended up crippled and in the hospital. Case in point, Cactus Jack. Cactus Jack thought he could beat Vader, instead he got beat to a pulp, suffering a broken cheekbone, a broken nose, black eyes, injured neck and back, and damaged knee ligaments. Jack, try standing in traffic outside the Omni next time, you'll be a lot safer! Actually, WCW is a lot worse off today because of their loss of Cactus Jack, he's a true talent in this profession with skill few men can match.

Then you have the so-called "men" WCW deems worthy of putting up against Vader, slime such as Stink, Dusty Rhodes Jr., Van Hammer and Ron Simmons. Men with a collective I.Q. of one. None of those worms, with the exception of Stink, has ever been worthy of standing in the same ring with Vader. Rhodes wound up with a fractured collarbone, Simmons' career was destroyed, along with his shoulder blade, and Stink felt pain from broken ribs and busted teeth. No, Vader doesn't take it easy on the "men" he gets into the ring with, probably because he doesn't respect them. And, really, what is there to respect in opposition such as this?

Sitting home in England, watching the carnage Vader caused on ITV, was one Davey Boy Smith, England's big idol, former WWF Inter-Continental Champion and WWF World Tag Team Champion. He thought it was time to put a stop to Vader, so he signed a contract with WCW, and on his first night in challenged the 450 lb. behemoth to fight him. Smith is a legendary tough guy who paid dues in Stampede wrestling for years (when he was a skinny, little wimp) and

PHOTOS BY JO ELLEN HALLMARK and JOHN BARRETT

By trouncing "Wild" Bill Irwin in his 1st WCW match, Smith showed he would be a force to be reckoned with.

Smith gave Vader all he could handle at Slamboree, but couldn't win the World crown even though he won via a DQ.

won plenty of titles, feuding with the Harts. Smith later went to the WWF, and with help from massive dosages of Hulk Hogan Vitamins, became a 280 lb. mini-Mack truck himself who threw away the flying moves for power moves. He got so big, he could barely move around the stinking ring, thus had no choice but to abuse his poor opponent. Eventually, he got Bret Hart on his home turf and won the WWF I-C Title from him, stabbing his brother-in-law in the back in the process. A few months later, he was gone from the WWF, humiliated by Shawn Michaels on nationwide TV.

Then he called WCW and the rest was history. Only three months after arriving on the scene, he was placed inside the ring with Vader at Slamboree '93. This probably surprised Smith, as he is accustomed to not having his challenges accepted by anyone. But Vader isn't anyone, Vader is Vader and he fears no man. Vader seeks out opponents to destroy. To calm himself down after matches, Vader blasts Pantera and Metallica CDs throughout the neighborhood until he relaxes. Who's going to call the cops on Vader just because it's 3 a.m.? Anyways, Vader looked forward to the match—a new opponent to brutalize, someone who didn't fear him. So, he didn't beat Smith, big deal, he busted up the cretin's nose, didn't he? If that message didn't get through, Smith's leg or arm could be next, because regardless of what *you* think, Davey Boy Smith (accent on the *Boy*) isn't man enough to beat Vader today, won't be man enough to beat Vader tomorrow and probably won't ever be the man who beats Vader! He's just too small, if you can call a 5'11", 280 lb. man "small". The man who could beat Vader has to have size and strength to combat Vader's guerrilla tactics and warfare. He has to be brutal, he has to punish the huge goliath before the sado-masochist can punish him. Vader can't be able to pick him up and throw him around the ring like a stuffed doll. Smith is approximately the same size and weight as Ron Simmons, and Vader handled Simmons like he was nothing (which, unfortunately, he is). So, what in heaven's name makes your imbecilic, little minds possibly think Davey *Boy* Smith can beat him?!?! Is it because Stink has befriended the Limey interloper? Is it because he braids his hair? Or is it just because you're all so stupid??? Personally, I voted for Proposition III (hahaha!!). At the present time, there is only one man in WCW with the capabilities of humiliating Vader and even **you** know who that is. No, it's not Ric Flair, he couldn't pin a worthless piece of garbage like Chump Hogan, so how can he possibly pin Vader?? It's the only other man in WCW who listens to Metallica and Pantera CDs at 4 a.m. in the morning. Yes, he has a manager as well. Yes, he's big and weighs a lot, and, yes, he's ugly also. The only man in WCW man enough to beat Vader is his new tag team partner—Sid Vicious!! WCW get on the case, you morons, sign the match fans want to see—Sid Vicious vs. "Big" Van Vader for the WCW World Title!!! ■

Smith is powerful enough to match up against Vader's might.

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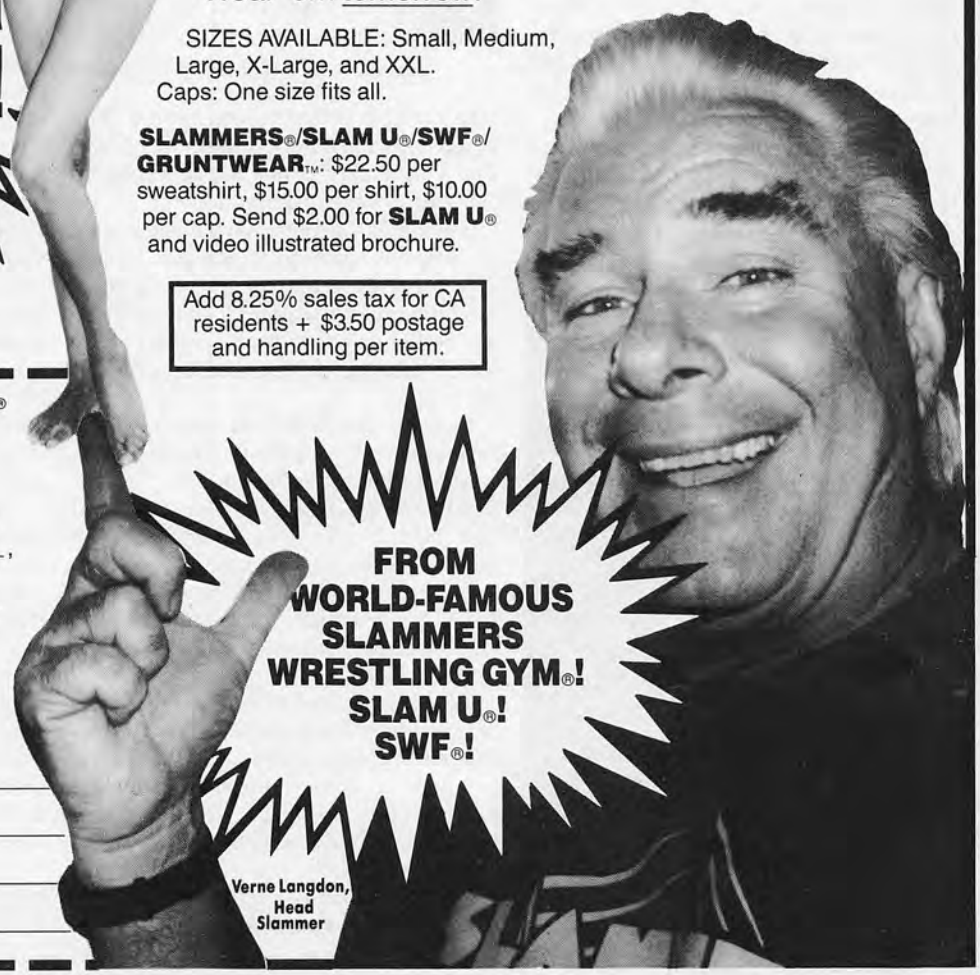

FROM WORLD-FAMOUS SLAMMERS WRESTLING GYM®! SLAM U®! SWF®!

Verne Langdon, Head Slammer

WRESTLING ROUND-UP

A monthly report on all the latest happenings in the world of Professional Wrestling

Rick and Scott Steiner won, lost and regained the WWF World Tag Team titles from Money, Inc. within a matter of six days in June. On June 13th, The Steiners won the belts for the first time in Columbus, Ohio. Two days later in Illinois, they lost the crowns back to Money, Inc., then on 6/19 in St. Louis, Rick and Scott regained the belts, making them two-time WWF tag champions. Look for Ted DiBiase to leave the WWF the day after SummerSlam to wrestle in his old Japanese home, All-Japan Wrestling. DiBiase is a wrestling legend in Japan.

1-2-3 Kid, formerly The Lightning Kid, stunned the wrestling world by beating Razor Ramon in a match televised on RAW. Humiliated, Ramon offered the Kid money to get back into the ring with him. Kid turned down offers of $2,500, $5,000 and $7,500 but accepted a $10,000 offer to wrestle Ramon at our deadline.

Marty Jannetty came out of the crowd at a recent RAW taping when Shawn Michaels challenged anyone in the crowd to get into the ring with him. Marty then pinned Shawn to take the WWF Inter-Continental belt. A couple of weeks later, Michaels regained the belt from Jannetty in Albany, N.Y. with the help of his new bodyguard, Diesel (Vinnie Vegas).

Mr. Hughes and Giant Gonzales attacked The Undertaker at a recent TV taping and put Paul Bearer out of commission and stole the urn that is The Undertaker's inspiration. Without his urn, The Undertaker is not the superhuman being he always appeared to be.

Ric Flair wrestled Barry Windham for the NWA Title at Beach Blast.

Paul Bearer was attacked by Giant Gonzales and Mr. Hughes.

PHOTOS BY RICH NIEVES

The Smoking Guns have made a good impression since they debuted in the WWF and have moved up the tag team rankings quickly. It appears that the Guns will be fighting the HeadShrinkers to see which team is the #1 contenders for the tag belts.

New to the WWF in recent weeks, besides Diesel, were Bastian Booger, who used to be known as Norman the Lunatic, Makhan Singh, Klondyke Mike Shaw and The Mad Monk, Atom Bomb (ex-The Night Stalker) and his manager, Johnny Polo (ex-Scotty the Body, Scott Anthony and Scotty Flamingo) and M.O.M., Men On A Mission (the ex-Harlem Knights from the USWA).

We have received word about the status of two superstars in the WWF. It appears that Hulk Hogan and Sensational Sherri will both be leaving the WWF after the summer. Sherri will be wrestling independently, while Hogan appears set to be off to Hollywood.

What is wrong with the WCW? Everything. This past week showed some of the most tasteless skits in the history of wrestling. I am speaking about attempted murder by Van Vader, Sid Vicious, Col. Rob Parker and Harley Race, who placed a bomb on a boat Sting was on. Then the Cactus Jack skits have been totally beyond the bounds of taste. Each week's skit insults the intelligence of viewers while putting down some of the more unfortunate in society. The first skit made fun of mentally handicapped people and older adults, while the latest skit found humor in homelessness. Keep up the great work, guys!

The most recent Clash saw Ric Flair return to the ring as Arn Anderson's tag partner facing the Hollywood Blonds for the unified titles. Flair and Arn won the match but didn't get the belts because they won the second fall via a DQ. Flair was attacked by Barry Windham, thus setting up a match for the NWA World Title at Beach Blast. Flair hasn't wrestled Windham in a singles bout since 1987. In other news from the Clash—Maxx Payne shot Johnny B. Badd in the face with the Badd Blaster injuring Johnny's eyes. Johnny will be back to get his revenge. Ron Simmons defeated Dirty Dick Slater, who subbed for the injured "Mr. Wonderful" Paul

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Orndorff, Lord Steven Regal, with his manager Sir William Dundee, beat Marcus Alexander Bagwell. Sid Vicious, "Big" Van Vader and "Ravishing" Rick Rude defeated Dustin Rhodes, Sting and Davey Boy Smith, when Rude clobbered Rhodes in the head with the metal briefcase he uses to carry around the U.S. title belt. The Clash was the lowest-viewed Clash in the history of the series. WCW needs to do something drastic to regain its lost popularity.

New to WCW were Sid Vicious who teamed up with manager, Col. Rob Parker (Robert Fuller), Sir William Dundee, Lord Regal's manager, The Black Hearts (who seem to have already disappeared) and Nailz the Prisoner (ditto). Gone from WCW are Shane Douglas, Scott "Flash" Norton and Robbie V. The Ebony Experience is rumored to be coming into WCW during the summer.

Papa Shango has beaten Jerry Lawler to become the USWA World Champion, and is still holding on to the strap as of deadline time. Recently Lawler had a rematch but was disqualified when he got caught throwing fire. Brian Christopher is the Southern Heavyweight Champion, and has held off recent challenges from Jeff Jarrett and The Undertaker. Simply Divine, Rex King and Steve Doll, are the tag champs and have held off challenges from PG-13 and Jeff Jarrett and Moondog Spot.

Nanny Simpson has made her presence felt in the area, managing C.W. Bergstrom. Simpson is Chris Adams' ex-wife Toni Adams.

Papa Shango holds the USWA World Heavyweight Championship.

Jimmy Del Ray (top) replaced Stan Lane in The Heavenly Bodies.

It appears the working agreement the USWA has with the WWF is beginning to pay off as the WWF is sending wrestlers into the USWA to get experience before coming North, and giving some of their own wrestlers another place to earn a paycheck. Johnny Polo and M.O.M. came directly into the WWF from the USWA and Nanny Simpson and Bergstrom appear to be on their way within weeks. WWF wrestlers such as Papa Shango, The Undertaker, Randy Savage, Owen Hart and Giant Gonzales have already appeared in USWA rings, not to mention Jerry Lawler, who is splitting time between both groups.

Others in Memphis recently included Koko B. Ware, Jeff Gaylord, The Master of Terror, Danny Davis (USWA Middleweight Champion), The Untouchables with mgr. Ronnie Lottz and managers Bert Prentice and Mike Samples.

Tracy Smothers regained the held-up Smoky Mountain Heavyweight title when he beat The Dirty White Boy in Knoxville, TN. recently, but he now has his hands full with ex-friend Brian Lee who attacked Tracy with a chair and left him laying in a Johnson City, TN. ring. Lee had come to the ring to stop DWB and Kevin Sullivan from beating on Tracy.

Jim Cornette brought a mystery team to SMW to try to take the tag belts from The Rock 'N' Roll Express. They are Ron and Don Harris, The Bruise Brothers. For now, they appear to be too much for Ricky and Robert, pummelling them every match, but yet to win the belts.

After receiving a beating at the hands of Jim Cornette, SMW Commissioner, Bob Armstrong has resigned from his position and is coming out of retirement to get revenge on Cornette and his "new" Heavenly Bodies. To that end he has recruited his two sons, Scott and Steve, as tag partners. Cornette was forced to find a new partner for Dr. Tom Prichard when Stan Lane was forced to leave the territory when he was pinned in a match against The Rock 'N' Roll Express. Cornette found "Gigolo" Jimmy Del Rey, Prichard's cousin, and brought him to SMW.

PHOTOS BY RICH NIEVES and JO ELLEN HALLMARK

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Iceman Parsons is dating Chris Adams' ex-wife, Toni and battling Chris.

Bobby Blaze pulled off an upset and became the newest SMW TV Champion in the "Beat the Champ" series. Blaze had not been very successful in prior SMW appearances.

Chris Candito arrived in SMW and said he was the WWA World Heavyweight Champion, the "real" World Champion. The SMW Board of Directors is considering recognizing the WWA World Title in the territory.

Others wrestling in SMW include Dutch Mantell, Jimmy Golden, Tim Horner and Killer Kyle.

The biggest feud in the GWF at the present time involves Chris Adams, Toni Adams (Chris' ex-wife) and Iceman King Parsons. Parsons has started dating Toni and this has infuriated Chris Adams, whom Toni is suing for financial support. Toni acts as Iceman's valet and has cost Chris several matches against her boyfriend, Parsons.

Adams is also involved in another feud with Rod Price, whose hair weave he pulled out on purpose during a match at the Sportatorium. Price has vowed to get revenge for the attack which put 100 stitches in his scalp.

The tag team champions are Guido Falcone and Vito Mussolini and they are feuding with The Ebony Experience (Stevie Ray is still the N.A. Champion, although he rarely defends that belt) and Tribal Nation.

Angel of Death is now a fan favorite, called, simply, Angel and he has been feuding with Killer Tim Brooks and his ex-manager Scandor Akbar. Brooks has also been feuding with Crazy Mike Davis, but Davis has just left the GWF.

Others wrestling in the GWF include Dick Murdoch, Bam Bam Richardson, Action Jackson, Black Bart and Big John Hawk, Ray Evans, Calvin Knapp, Alex Porteau, Plowboy Wilbur, John Tatum, the Kongs, Al Perez, Chuck West, Mr. Wrestling III, Lance Thunder and Capt. Ron.

In Portland, Jesse Barr, the Mad Dog, and his Dog Pack are feuding with just about everyone. Barr and Bruiser Bryan have been teaming up against Sumito the Wild Samoan and Max Steel, as well as the Pope Brothers. "Big Dog" Lou Andrews has been feuding with Sumito, as well.

Col. DeBeers is the Northwest TV Champion and has defended his title recently against the likes of the Pope Brothers, Buddy Wayne and Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka.

Others wrestling in Portland include Al Madrill, Dane Rush, Rambo, Nick Danger and the Silver Shadow. Championship Wrestling U.S.A. has moved from its long-time home at the Portland Sports Arena to the Interstate Pavillion.

On to the independents, starting with the E.C.W. in Philadelphia. ECW wrestling is seen on SportsChannel Philadelphia every Tuesday evening. Don Muraco is the ECW Heavyweight Champion, Jimmy Snuka is the ECW TV Champion and the Suicide Blonds, Chris Michaels and Johnny Hot Body (who is **not** a blond!), hold the tag titles.

Paul E. Dangerously has reformed his Dangerous Alliance here. This time the members include Muraco, Snuka, Eddie Gilbert and The Dark Patriot. Eddie Gilbert just beat Terry Funk in a brutal chain match to be named "King of Philadelphia".

Ex-tag team partners, Tony Stetson and Larry Winters are feuding with each

Eddie Gilbert beat Terry Funk to be crowned "King of Philadelphia".

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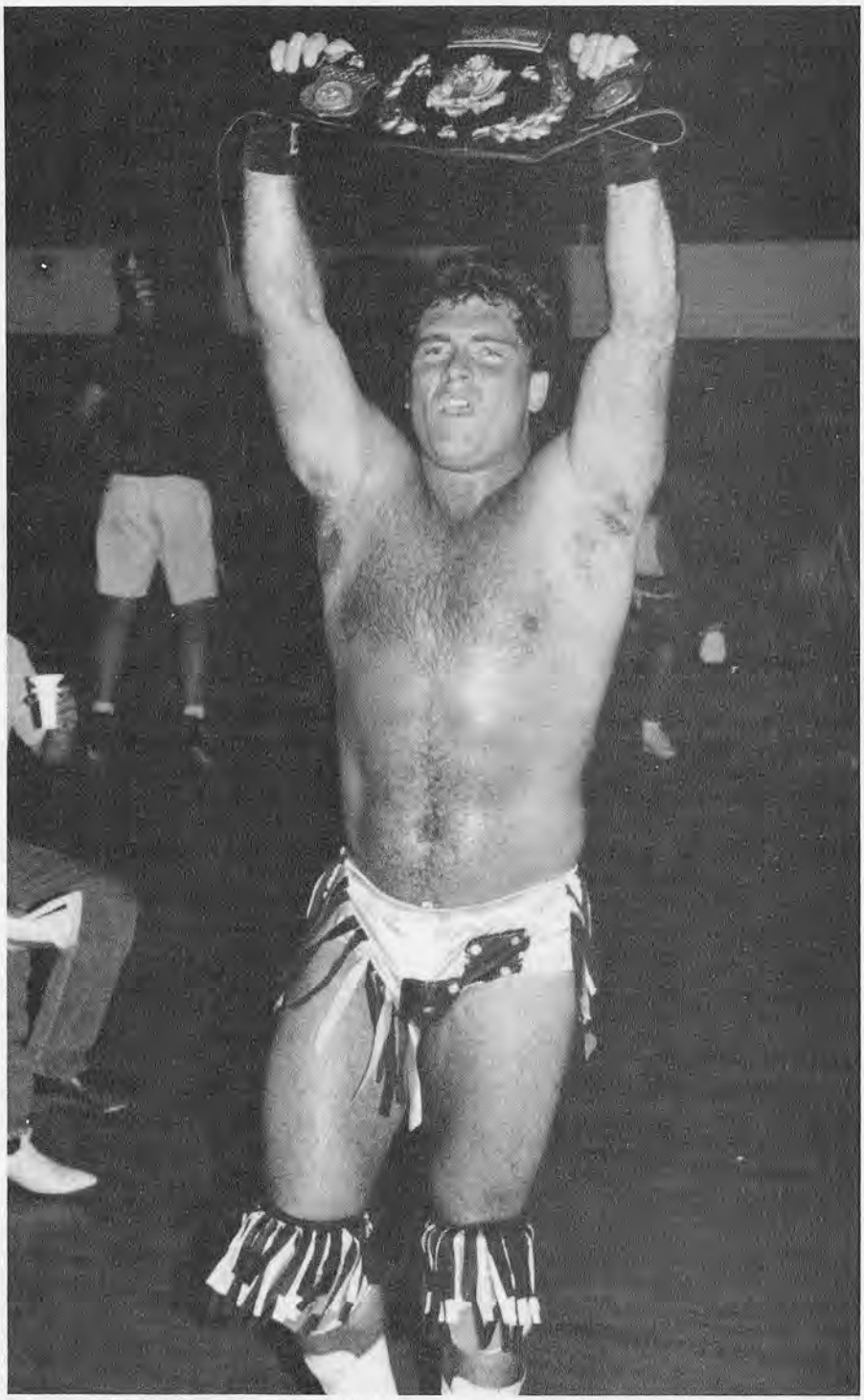
other, as are The Sandman and Rockin' Rebel. Others wrestling in the ECW include The Super Destroyers, J.T. Smith, Dick Murdoch, Jimmy Jannetty, Tommy Cairo and Glen Osborne. In September a big show is planned for the Philadelphia area which will involve the WWA, SMW and W*ING promotions, as well.

The WWWA is another promotion in the Northeast Pennsylvania area. Nailz is the WWWA Heavyweight Champion and is feuding with the WWWA Inter-Continental Champion, Jack Hammer. The Diamond Express, Steve "Wild Child" Savage and Jim the Messenger managed by Reverend Diamond Mike, are the tag champs and have recently held off the challenge of The Bushwhackers. Brittany Brown is the ladies champion and fending off challenges from Alexis Star. Others wrestling in the WWWA are Derrick Domino, Steve Richards, Dennis Dymond, Johnny Rebel, Randy Heman and the Grim Reaper.

W.I.N. is still operating in the Baltimore area, although under new management. W.I.N. has just contracted four TV outlets in Maryland and will tape their first shows in late July. The W.I.N. Heavyweight Champion is Hack Myers while the tag champs are Bad Breed, Axl and Ian Rotten. Others wrestling for W.I.N. at the present time are A.C. Golden, The Cream Team, Rasta the Voodoo Mon, Nikolai Volkoff, Mascara El Exotico, Don Muraco and the Honky Tonk Man. Axl Rotten also wants all his fans in the Baltimore area to listen to his wrestling talk show on radio station WERQ 1010 AM every Saturday morning from 11-12:30.

Mean Marc Ash is the AWF/ICW Heavyweight Champion in North Carolina. He is feuding with his ex-partners The Iranian Butcher and Lex Reed, and now teaming with former rival, Wahoo McDaniel. The World Famous Spoilers are the tag champs, holding off Ash and McDaniel. Others wrestling in the AWF/ICW include Johnny Dollars, Pez Whatley, Khan, Splasher and Rockin' R.A., Brent Maverick and Mr.X, Agent Steel, The Bounty Hunter and The Lightning Express.

Many of these same wrestlers also compete for Carolina Championship Wrestling. Kahn the Warlord has a long-standing feud with the Iron Chief in this promotion. Others in the CCWA include The Intruder, the Dog, Wise Guy Jimmy Cicero, Nightbreed, Mike Maverick, Steve Storm, the Gemini Kid, Jimmy Valentine, Kid Vicious, Thunder Tiger and Michael Yamaha.



Reno Riggins is the first Spectrum Sports Heavyweight Champion.

PHOTO BY STEVE BRYANT

Spectrum Sports is a new promotional group based in Nashville, TN. On 6/11/93 they presented WrestleRama 1993 which was a one-night tournament to crown the heavyweight champion of the new group. The men who entered the tournament were Reno Riggins, The Claw, Dutch Mantell, Jeff Daniels, The Sheik, "Comet" Chris Michaels, "The Winner" Barry Horowitz, Tenshi, Dante, The Mongolian Mauler, Ben Jordan and Gary Valiant. The finals came down to Horowitz/Riggins

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Al Costello presents the "new" Kangaroos, Al Snow (l.) & Dennis Kass.

PHOTO BY DON LAIBLE

and Reno pinned "The Winner" to become the first-ever Spectrum Sports Heavyweight Champion. Spectrum Sports plans to bring in wrestlers such as The Ultimate Warrior, Jake Roberts, The Honky Tonk Man and other big-name independent stars to provide their fans with the best possible shows for their money.

The Southern Wrestling Federation has been promoting around the Orlando, Fla. area for the past five years and has provided its fans with lots of action. "Golden Boy" Jerry Grey is the S.W.F. Heavyweight Champion and the S.W.F. Ladies Champion is Amy Grey. Others wrestling for the S.W.F. include Terry Hart, Kevin Diamond, Ed West, Roadblock Rex, Bugsy McGraw, Randy Craft, Jumping Jack Flash, The Outlaw, Chief Thunder Eagle and The Scorpion.

Cleveland All-Pro Wrestling is the newest promotion to break out in the Midwest. They will promote shows every six weeks at Cleveland's St. Michael's Hall. Wrestlers here include The American Patriot, Sin Pansa, Johnny Walker, Kid Collins, "Hollywood" Todd Taylor, Ryan Scott, Johnny Paradise, Johnny Rotten and Vince Wylde. Their recognized champions are U.S. Lt. Heavyweight Champion—J.T. Lightning, tag champs—The Dreaded Deadringers and North American Champion, Ron Cumberledge.

Also in the midwest, Al Costello is proud to announce the newest version of The Fabulous Kangaroos—Al Snow and Dennis Kass. Acting in a managerial role for the two youngsters, Costello is excited about going on tour with his proteges. Costello is a veteran of over fifty years on the mat and went on an extensive talent search to find his new Kangaroos. Kangaroo Al is issuing challenges to all who would like to try their skills on his team. Those interested in booking The Kangaroos are invited to contact Costello at: **2266 Gulf to Bay Blvd., Lot #344, Clearwater, Fla. 34625.**

The Nu-Age Heavyweight Champion is still Tony the Annihilator. His top challengers include Pvt. Moondog, Conan the Dark Rider, Jim Brunzell (Light Heavyweight Champion), Texas Hangman Killer and The Cobra. Brunzell's top challengers are The Cobra, Brett Striker and Col. Walker.

The Heartland Heavyweight Champion is Hoss Elliott. The Missouri Champion is The California Stud. Others wrestling here include Kerry and James Lee, Matt Taylor, Rick Diamond, The Heartbreaker, Street Warrior, Al Stevens, Night Warrior, Angus King, Ric and Rob Dustry, Steve Montana, the Prince of Darkness and The Butcher.

According to reports, Big D Championship Wrestling is the #1 promotion in the city of Dallas, TX. Although they use many of the same wrestlers wrestling for the GWF, they don't rely on comedy and gimmicks and rely more on wrestling. Attendance increases at the Rock Palace on a weekly basis. "Wild" Bill Irwin is their heavyweight champion, Big D is the Lt. Heavyweight Champion. The hottest feud in the promotion involves Iceman Parsons and Scotty (the Body) Braddock with their manager, Freddie Fargo against Chris Adams and Action Jackson. Calvin Knapp is the #1 contender to Irwin's title, but Calvin suffered a ruptured patella tendon in his knee and will be out of action for quite some time. Newcomer Mr. Mister is feuding with Terry Simms. Big D's #1 contender is Jimmy James. Others wrestling for BDCW include Dick Murdoch, John Hawk, John Tatum, Gary Young, Steven Dane, Bubba Fangman, Billy Steele, Billy Joe Travis, Randy Rhodes and Ray Evans.

Another promotion in the Dallas area is the United Wrestling Alliance. Wrestlers here include Lance Thunder, Igor Smirnoff, Chris Barrett, Action Jackson, The Kongs, Killer Brooks, Bad Boy Billy Steele, Bubba Fangman, Bullman Downs, Mike Davis, Guido Falcone, The American Ninja, Comrade Conrad and managers, Freddie Fargo, Brandon Baxter and Sex Appeal.

Champions recognized by the AIWA in Southern California include Heavyweight—Alex Knight, Light Heavyweight—Thrillseeker Terry Zeller, Brass Knucks—The Time Traveller, Ladies—Cheryl "Lightning" Rusa, 6-Man—Dr. Jerry Graham, Bad Boy Bubba Storm & Desperado Mark Kissell, Tag Team—Spike Cantillo and The Medic. Others wrestling for the AIWA include Stephen DeLeon, Antonio Rocca, Rey Cobra, Kimara, Tlolac, The Night Stalker, The Hollywood Knight, The Violator and the Mauler.

Dynamite D is the Slammers heavyweight champion, holding off challenges from Bill Pearl. This bi-weekly promotion in Sun Valley, Calif. also includes wrestlers such as Lobo, Superstorm, Corporal Punishment, Sparky Carter, Malicious Mike, Hombre de Oro, Ritchie Dagger and Jeff Lindberg.

Championship Wrestling International promotes in Northern California. A tournament to crown the first-ever CWI Heavyweight Champion is currently in the planning stages. The two most popular wrestlers on the circuit are Willydawg and Wildman. They have formed a team to drive the rulebreaking duo of "Flawless" Shane Dynasty and The Roadhouse

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Renegade out of the federation. Other wrestlers competing for CWI include The Lurker, The Canadien Butcher, The Kamikaze Bomber, Roman Angel, Psycho Mark Manson and Fang.

The WCCW in British Columbia saw a new champion crowned as Gorgeous Michelle Starr defeated The Mighty Quinn to win the title. Timothy Flowers, Oly Olsen, Rocky Della Serra, Terry Tomko, The Wild Samoan, Buddy Wayne, Fire-fighter Adrian and Handsome Johnny Flash also wrestle for this promotion. On Sept. 11th, Earthquake John Tenta will challenge Starr for the heavyweight title.

Finally to end this edition of the Round-Up, WWOW makes their first trek up North, away from their Florida base, with two shows on August 28th at Garden State Racetrack in Cherry Hill, N.J. Wendi Richter, Bambi, Penelope Paradise, Peggy Lee Leather, Misty Blue, Linda Dallas and Kat LeRoux are scheduled. The first show is nearly sold-out at press deadline, so get your tickets fast for the evening show.■

Calvin Knapp has been sidelined with a patella tendon injury.

PHOTO BY STEPHEN BEYER

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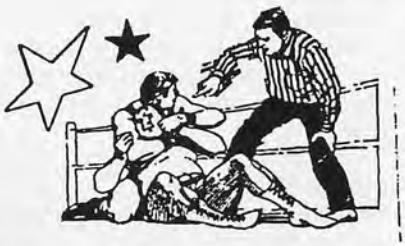

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Straight Shots From "FLAMBOYANT" FREDDIE FARGO

"Bonzai"...Yokozuna, two seconds before winning the WWF Heavyweight title for the second time.

"Pfoooooooooooo..." Hulk Hogan as he met Yokozuna's legdrop.

"Yes..Yes..Yes..," Freddie Fargo at that very same moment.

No matter what happens during the rest of 1993, that moment will be lodged in my memory bank as it's most memorable. The world watched as Hulk Hogan, and all his little "Hulknobrainiacs", descended, no, make that plummeted, from the platform of the elite in the wrestling world. What a wonderful event for us all! But, let's not dwell on such trivial matters as Hulk Hogan, or any other unimportant wrestling history. Instead, let's discuss the future of "the king of sports", since you're already holding it in your (very) undeserving little hands.

Yes, dear friends (well, at least in your dreams), what you are currently perusing at this moment is the first anniversary edition of what instantly became WME's most precious page, "Straight Shots." The impact from these regular lectures that has been felt in the wrestling world has been nothing short of phenomenal, but you should have expected nothing less.

Fargo explains why this advertisement will be his last in WME. Good Riddance!!

PHOTO BY STEPHEN BEYER

It would, in fact, take another whole year just to analyze what was accomplished here, so let's just touch on a few items. 1. It solidified my (oh so deserved) standing as wrestling's most widely-read and respected journalist. 2. It quintupled WME's subscriptions. 3. It dictated the course that the upper-echelon of this business would follow.

"Well, Freddie Fargo, that number three thing is about as brazen a statement as I've ever heard," is what I hear rattling around in your little pea brain at this very moment. OK, let me give you just one small example. Are you aware of the fact that WCW fired Bill Watts within 24 hours after I called for just that a few issues ago? That's the kind of impact that Freddie Fargo has on this business. Believe it or not, there's even a self-proclaimed wrestling "journalist" taking credit for getting that job done. He writes for a newsletter that has a readership of 0.000?% of that of WME, and he truly believes that some silly little fax that he sent to WCW had a bearing on Watts' dismissal. Silly little boy, you must know better than that! You're displaying naivete of the most grandeur order.

Every regular reader of this page, and that's all of you, knows that I broke new ground in this business by actually shelling out megabucks for this space in each issue. There was a twofold reason why I decided to take this route. First, it was to circumvent editorial control so that I could print nothing but the truth here, with no interference. Secondly, I foolishly thought I could raise your I.Q. beyond the number printed inside your shoes. I succeeded, in spades, on the first point, but that was a given. Somehow, however, I feel (for the first time in my life) that I failed miserably on the latter point. That's an alien, and very uncomfortable, feeling to me, and I don't like it one bit!

It is with that thought in mind that I officially announce that I'm pulling my wit, wisdom, and natural leadership abilities from the pages of WME. I've decided, with little effort, that you and they just plain don't deserve me. You're not worth my time, you're not worth my effort, and you're certainly not worth my money. I've completely broken off contract-renewal negotiations with WME's advertising department, and that's that! After all, what did I gain for all my hard work? Nothing more than a bunch of stupid messages and questions on my (214) 321-7025 VMB, and that just doesn't cut it.

Now, I think I'll just sit back and watch you all wander, and wonder, aimlessly while WME watches its subscriptions nosedive.

At this time, I'd like to say that I'm going to miss each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart. I'd like to say that, but that would be a lie and would spoil my otherwise perfect record, and we can't have that now, can we?

Sayonara, bubba.

(The preceding was a paid advertisement and does not reflect the views of the editors and management of Wrestling's Main Event.)

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THE HEART PUNCH

A no holds barred look at Professional Wrestling, straight from the heart!

By AL McGINESS

McGiness has mixed emotions about Dusty Rhodes' imminent return to the ring.

PHOTO BY BOB MURPHY

I have some terrible news for you simple-minded idiots. No, you miserable miscreants, I haven't been fired!! You should only live so long as to see that day happen. It's about the return to the ring of one of wrestling's biggest disgraces, Beached Whale Dusty Rhodes. Yes, this miserable piece of garbage is about to come out of retirement. The stage was set for his unwanted return to the ring at WCW's big party, Slamboree. It seems the beached whale has some enemies with extremely long memories, and they made it clear they were going to get the fat egomaniac. One of these enemies is The Assassin. Many, many years ago, The Assassin pinned the beached whale to usurp the NWA World Title from around Rhodes' fat waist. However, in order to be NWA World Heavyweight Champion, The Assassin would have had to unmask and make his identity known to NWA officials. Rather than unmask, The Assassin turned down the strap, thus keeping his identity a secret. The fat man, coward that he is, never had the decency to step into the ring with The Assassin again, and the masked man has been chasing the beached whale down ever since.

At Slamboree, he challenged Rhodes to step into the ring and wrestle him like a man, but the gutless coward wouldn't get into the ring. Uncharacteristically, Rhodes laid extremely low. Assassin had to go to extremes, he went on the pay-per-view telecast and once again dared the fat pig to get into the ring. Finally, seeing his manhood questioned on live TV got to the beached whale and he came out and said he would wrestle The Assassin any time, any place. Of course, saying isn't doing and it's going to take a lot of work to actually get that coward to sign his name on the dotted line for a match with the legendary Assassin. But Assassin isn't the only man gunning for the beached whale. There's another man now working in WCW who wants a piece of that fat hide, he's Blackjack Mulligan. Mulligan and Rhodes used to be friends, until Jack began to realize what a backstabbing lowlife the piece of trash is. Ever since he woke up, Mulligan and Rhodes have been at each other's throats. Mulligan is petitioning WCW mismanagement to allow him to sign a wrestling contract. Jack's stated goal is to team up with his son, Barry Windham and chase the Rhodes family out of wrestling once and for all. Like everyone else, they are tired of hearing the big bag of wind run his huge mouth and have nothing at all to say.

Although it disgusts me to no end having to see the beached whale drag his obese carcass into the ring, it will please me to no end to see that fat slob dragged from the ring after The Assassin and Mulligan and Windham are finished with him. Anybody that knows me knows how much I detest The American Dream and everything he stands for. He is a disgrace to the sport of wrestling, and is certainly no representative of the human race. For too many years, I have seen this fat piece of garbage wrestle, then introduce his son, The Sperm Whale, to the sport. And Dusty Jr. has definitely lived down to the family's reputation. Without protection from promoters and referees (who are in the pockets of Dusty and his rotten son), these two would have been out of the business long ago. But still they are around adding to their disgraceful legacy by the day. But soon, Rhodes, your dream will turn into a nightmare. Mulligan and The Assassin are on your fat trail. For once, you won't be able to escape. You will be severely injured, if not killed, by the wrath of these two men, two of the many enemies you have made over the years. It will have been worth the wait over lo these many years to finally see you crippled and in a wheelchair, for if one man truly deserves to suffer pain—it is you Dusty Rhodes. Although I don't want to see you wrestle again, it will be worth it to enjoy watching the end of your miserable career. Goodbye, Dusty Rhodes, goodbye and good riddance—once and for all!!!

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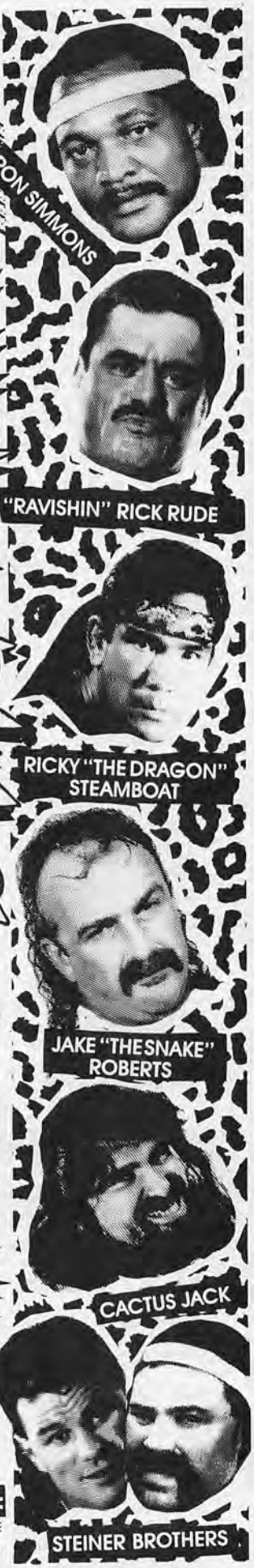

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LETTER FROM JAPAN

By TOKIO TSUKADA

As I wrote in my column in the October '92 issue, eleven different pro wrestling promotions exist in Japan. That is true, but in addition to that, three independent ladies' pro wrestling promotions are running successfully.

This time, let me take you to the Japanese Ladies' Pro Wrestling world. Ladies' pro wrestling has a long history, as the All-Japan Pro Wrestling federation was founded 25 years ago. All Japan could not even dream about today's success at that time because ladies' wrestling was not accepted by society as "pure sport". It was considered "underground" entertainment. All Japan struggled against the treatment, and started to obtain a fairly good reputation by making great efforts to train wrestlers and keep up a good quality of wrestling. All Japan created superstars such as The Beauty Pair and Crush Gals. They were outstanding not only for wrestling, but also as TV entertainment. As a result, ladies' pro wrestling developed a large following, and major shows were broadcast on Japanese TV regularly. Getting out of the dark ages, Ladies' Pro Wrestling became one of the major sports in Japan.

Let me introduce to you the three ladies' pro wrestling promotions and give you an idea of what they are doing. All Japan Ladies Pro Wrestling features Bull Nakano, Akira Hokuto, Aja Kong, Manami Toyoda and Toshiyo Yamada. This promotion is the top ladies' promotion in the world with over 25 years of history and accomplishments.

The JWP project stars Dynamite Kansai, Mayumi Ozaki, Devil Masami and Cutie Suzuki. The LLPW (Ladies Legend Pro Wrestling) stars Rumi Kazama, Shinobu Kandori, Noriyo Tateno and Harley Saito. Men's promotion FMW (Frontier Martial Arts) also has lady wrestlers such as Combat Toyota and Megumi Kudo.

To celebrate their 25th Anniversary, All Japan Ladies Pro Wrestling held the "All Star Dream Slam" at the Yokohama Arena on April 2nd before 16,500 fans. All the lady wrestlers from the different promotions joined together for this all-star card and it was a great success. From where I sit, Japan is the only country in the world where independent ladies' pro wrestling events are successful. In the U.S., there is some ladies' wrestling, but it is usually included on a men's event, not an all-ladies' card.

Aja Kong & Bull Nakano are two top female stars in Japan.

PHOTO BY TOKIO TSUKADA

In the important results on this card, in the "Memorial Super Fight", Chigusa Nagayo, one of the Crush Gals and a living legend, wrestled against Devil Masami. Since Nagayo is retired from wrestling and now a movie star (starring in *"Ring, Ring, Ring"* with actress Yoko Shimada who was on *"Shogun"*), this match was scheduled as a ten-minute exhibition. But due to requests by Nagayo and Masami, it became a one-fall, no-time limit match. There was lots of mat wrestling and flying moves, but finally, Devil pinned Nagayo.

In "Heat Up the Shining Stars", Kyoko Inoue and Takako Inoue vs. Mami Ozaki and Cutie Suzuki, both Inoues showed splendid teamwork and Kyoko pinned Ozaki.

The next match "Mega Monster War" featured Aja Kong and Bull Nakano against Harley Saito and Eagle Sawai. Aja and Nakano showed powerful and rough fighting and Bull pinned Saito.

"Full Power Destiny '93" was held between Yumiko Hotta and Dynamite Kansai. Kansai's unrelenting, hard kicking style, and her favorite "Tsutenkaku Special" (power bomb), knocked out Hotta.

The next fight was "Decision of the Dangerous Queen" pitting Akira Hokuto against Shinobu Kandori. Since both of them are top stars in their promotions, this match became the most thrilling and exciting one of the evening. Kandori is a master of the strong (UWF) style and her unrelenting kicking and submission holds made this match intense. Hokuto was bleeding heavily, and everyone thought she would be knocked out at any time. On the contrary, Hokuto did her best at the last moment and finally pinned Kandori after more than 30 minutes.

Next came the main event, "The All Japan Ladies Pro Wrestling Dream-Winning Road", Toshiyo Yamada and Manami Toyota vs. Combat Toyota and Megumi Kudo. Yamada and Toyota are WWWA World Tag Champions, and could not lose the match against the FMW's best. It was a very close match, but Manami Toyota pinned Kudo.

Overall, this show was a great success and the attendance was a new record for ladies' pro wrestling in Japan. The event created another new record, as well, the entire card took about *six* hours, which we had never seen before, and probably never will again. The surprising thing was no one who saw the show complained about its length, or the problems it caused in getting home from the show. While waiting for transportation home, all the fans were talking about how great and exciting the matches were! They were completely satisfied with this show. Ladies wrestling in Japan is *very* popular right now. (For your reference, most wrestling shows in Japan start at 6:30 p.m. and are over by 9:30 p.m., this show started at 6:20 p.m. and ended at 12:17 a.m. the next day!) ■

JAPANESE TOP TEN (as of 6/11/93)

1. The Great Muta
2. Jushin Liger
3. The Ultimate Dragon
4. Nobuhiko Takada
5. Mitsuharu Misawa
6. El Samurai
7. Kenta Kobashi
8. Kensuke Sasaki
9. "New" Tiger Mask
10. Toshiaki Kawada

—compiled by Clinton S. Freeman

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MAT MUSINGS

By BOB SMITH

Yes, the author of this column is the same one that you read in that *other* wrestling magazine for more than five years. What am I doing here?

Well, to put it simply, **Sandy Krebs**, my new editor and an old comrade, asked me to come on board. Sandy's got a good eye for talent, doesn't he? In addition, I've always enjoyed *Main Event*, a magazine that treats mat fans with the respect that they deserve. I'm very happy to be working with Sandy, **Don Laible, Freddie Fargo** and **Dennis Brent**, all of whom I've had the pleasure of being associated with before. I'm ecstatic to be a part of the all-new *Main Event*. I'm glad that you've found me here, and I'm hoping that you'll look for my column and features in every edition from now on. Now, on to more pertinent matters:

Is there a more unlikable presence in the sport right now than **Hulk Hogan**? I realize that statement may anger more than a few of the dwindling number of "Hulkamaniacs" out there, but isn't it about time this pompous windbag egomaniac displayed a dash of humility? The way he tells it, Hogan insists there was a conspiracy to keep him away from the WWF World belt before **Yokozuna** and **Mr. Fuji** made their ill-advised challenge at WrestleMania. Hulk, after everything that's been said about you during the past year, wouldn't you be better off clamming up and just wrestling?

This is not meant to be an endorsement, but ICOPRO works. I have two friends, both non-athletes, who used the program along with the diet and training recommendations included in the kit. After three months, they both look great. So what's **Doink's** excuse?

On the recent **Terry Funk—Mr. Onita** exploding ring bout in Japan: Haven't things gone just a bit too far? I'm sure this bout was very exciting, but what's next? Guns at 20 paces? Gasoline and matches bouts? When a barbed-wire bout is viewed as mundane and passe, this sport has a problem. Let's hope that the sickness that has invaded Frontier Martial Arts doesn't invade these shores—**Kevin Sullivan** notwithstanding.

Could it be deja-vu in the Parsons-Adams feud in Texas?

Toni Adams and **Chris Adams** not only had an in-ring split in Global recently, but Toni's now assisting **Iceman Parsons** during the King's matches. Three years ago, the Toni Adams—**Jeannie Clarke** feud was one of the most exciting spectacles I've ever witnessed. Wonder who Chris will bring to ringside to combat Toni? If the past bears on the future, get your binoculars ready, Texas fans!

It was great to see all those all-time stars at Slamboree '93, wasn't it? Thank goodness my VCR has a pause button.

Speaking of Slamboree, there's one thing that has to be said about the **Dick Murdoch, Jimmy Snuka** and **Don Muraco** vs. **Jim Brunzell, Blackjack Mulligan** and **Wahoo McDaniel** bout on that card: Those guys showed a lot of guts.

When the IWF appeared on New York's SportsChannel, I awaited the premiere with baited breath. After having seen it, I keep coming up with the same conclusion: *That's* the best they could come up with? Too much clowning, not enough wrestling, and people like **Nasty Ronnie** wonder why nobody pays any attention to the federation. Global was strike one, the IWF is strike two. The next strike, and the whole sport goes up in flames.

If **Sting** and **Davey Boy Smith** can't win the WCW World Tag Team Title from **Steve Austin** and **Brian Pillman**, who can?

It says volumes about the WWF when **The Smoking Guns** are more popular among the fans than **Rick** and **Scott Steiner** are.

Speaking of the Steiners, they recently lost a pretty lengthy series of matches to **The HeadShrinkers**, guys they used to grind into hamburger in the NWA. What do you think: **"Rubberman" Rick** and **"Stretchy" Scott, The Plastic Twins**? Like **Bob Backlund**, it's clear that wrestlers who wrestle in the WWF go nowhere.

I loved the AWA, but seeing **Greg Gagne** all over WCW telecasts is a little frightening. If they start touting **Buck Zumhofe** as a TV title contender, we'll know things have come full-circle.

Then again, isn't it time for a **Nick Bockwinkel** and **Ray Stevens** tag team comeback?

Not to mention **Verne Gagne**?

Is there any wrestler who has gone through more guises than **Scotty Levy/Scotty the Body/Scotty Flamingo/Scott Anthony/Johnny Polo**?

When will one of the majors wise up and sign **"Hollywood" John Tatum**? Talk about a guy who's paid his dues!

Despite the downright sickening antics of **Kevin Sullivan**, Smoky Mountain Wrestling continues to feature some of the hardest hitting action you'll see anywhere....if you can see it. If ever there was a federation that screamed for greater exposure, this is the one.

Do you get the feeling that WCW announcers **Larry Zbyszko** and **Jesse Ventura** don't like each other very much? Zbyszko's response when told that Ventura wouldn't be appearing on an installment of WCW Saturday Night: "Good!" Put 'em in the ring!

Who would've guessed that **Luna Vachon** would have an even more terrifying voice than **Mad Dog Vachon**?

The next time that you see **Cactus Jack** go barreling over a guard rail, remember: He's doing it all for you—and the sport. We need more guys willing to give it their all to win like Cactus does.

Till next time, remember: Respect is a two-way street. If you get it, give it. If not, drive down the street in a tank. ■

(ed. note: Veteran wrestling writer Bob Smith is back and **WME** *has got him! In this provocative column, Smith sounds off on every mat star and federation imaginable. You may not agree with his opinions, but we'll guarantee his unique perspective on the sport will give you food for thought!)*

PHOTO BY STEPHEN BEYER

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JERRY LAWLER: *WWF'S King of the Cowards!*

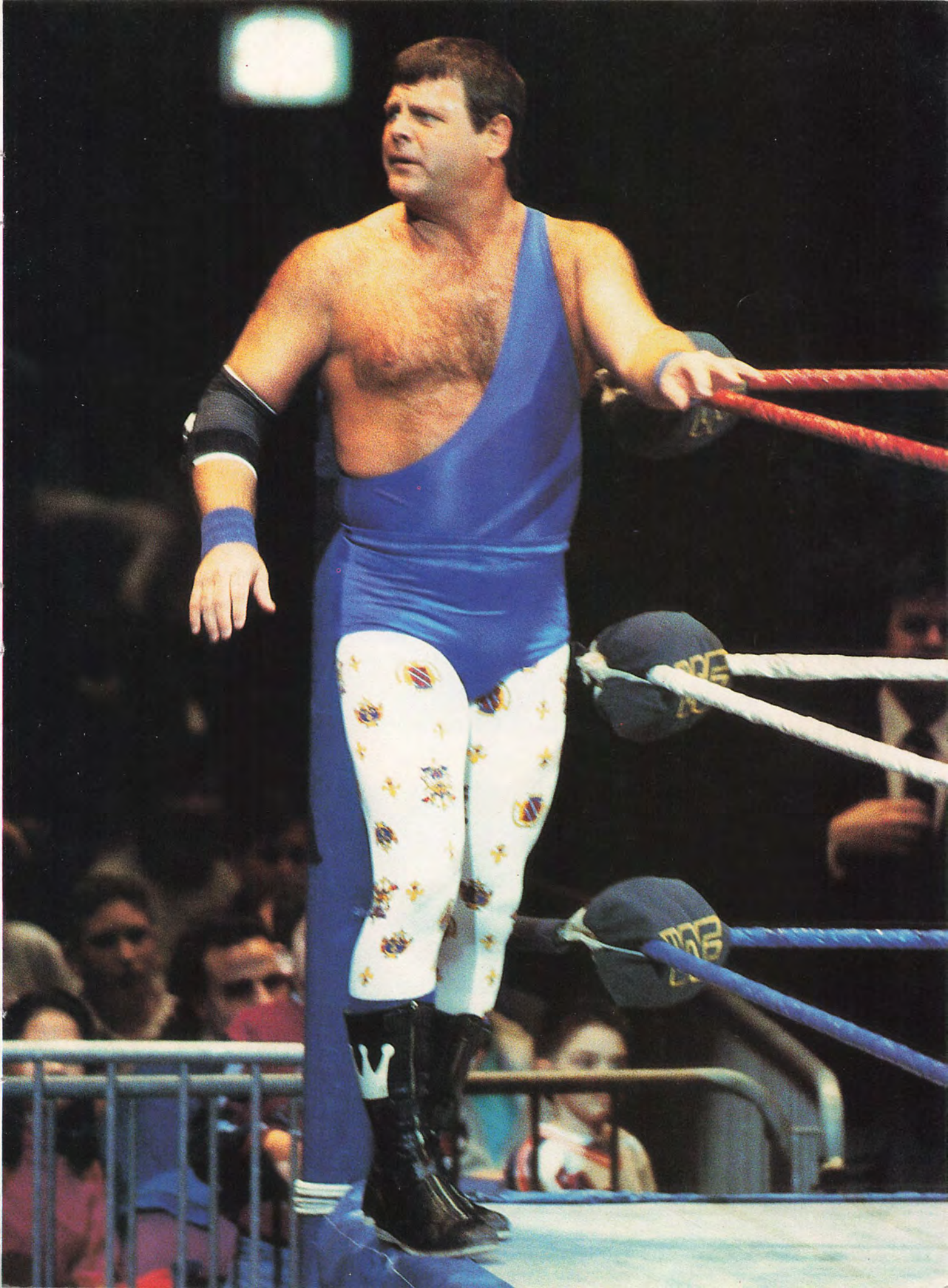
By BOB SMITH

It was Bret Hart's moment of glory, being crowned "WWF King of the Ring". But Jerry Lawler ruined it and left Bret laying on the steps to the throne. It's just like Lawler to attack unsuspected, he's king of the cowards!

For many years, Jerry Lawler was a notorious rulebreaker in the South. Managed by Jimmy Hart, he wrestled and beat every man put in front of him. Huge crowds came to the arenas to see him be beaten, he named himself "the King". Then a metamorphosis came about and Lawler became the most popular athlete in the history of Memphis wrestling, he turned his back on the rulebreakers and fought for the fans. It wasn't that he changed his style of wrestling, just who he wrestled.

Lawler became an outstanding citizen of the community, respected by the entire state—a position in government after retirement wasn't totally out of the question. Many times over he became the USWA World Heavyweight Champion. But outside of Memphis, Jerry Lawler was a different character. Who could ever forget the frightful beating Lawler inflicted upon the late Kerry Von Erich at SuperClash III in Chicago? Lawler loaded up his glove and pounded Von Erich into a bloody mess until the referee stopped the match and handed over to Lawler the World Class Heavyweight Championship. Lawler single-handedly nearly started a Civil War between the states of Texas and Tennessee when he defamed the Texas wrestling fans at the Cotton Bowl. In Philadelphia, Lawler got involved in feuds

Lawler is beloved in Memphis, wrestling against Randy Savage. The same match in the WWF would have the fans booing Jerry.



Lawler traps his opponent in a corner while gloating to his WWF "fans".

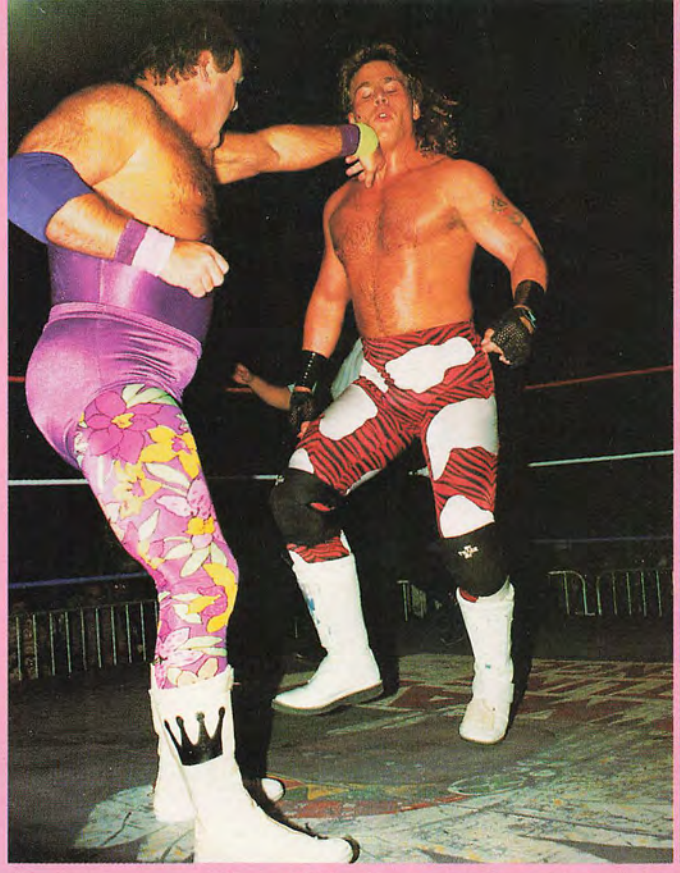
Jerry Lawler made his first-ever Madison Square Garden appearance and beat Tito Santana with a piledriver.

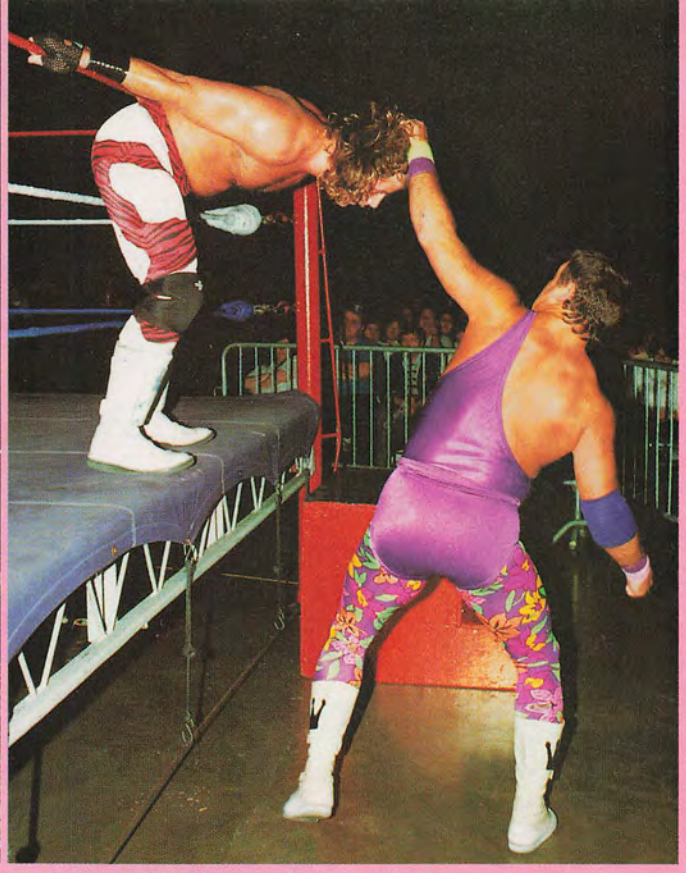
with Terry Funk and Eddie Gilbert in the Tri-State Wrestling Alliance, battles which saw the fans united against Lawler after he mocked them over the P.A. system. It was "the King" who broke the rules in a match against Bob Backlund for the WWA, when Backlund began to outwrestle him. Then Jerry Lawler came into the WWF and started to put down the fans' favorite wrestlers. Everywhere but Memphis it seems, Lawler is totally reviled. What is it Memphis sees in "the King" anyway?

I know what I see—I see a man who likes to brag and talk about how great a wrestler he is, but I see little wrestling. I see a man who attacks from behind, rather than face a challenger face-to-face. I see a man who will heinously throw fire at an opponent when the going gets rough. And, I see a jealous man who, in Bret Hart's moment of glory at "King of the Ring", sneak-attacked Bret and hit him with everything that wasn't nailed down, leaving Hart laying on the stairway to his throne.

What was Lawler upset about? He had a chance to enter the tournament, a chance to prove he was actually "the King of Wrestling" he says he is. When he declined his invitation, it was inevitable that a king (other than himself) would be crowned. But it's just like Jerry Lawler to take a shortcut. Rather than enter the tournament and possibly lose, he waited until it was over to make his point. He attacked a man who had wrestled three times in the evening, suffered numerous injuries in his matches and certainly wasn't expecting what was to come. Now, just as sure as the sun will come out tomorrow, Lawler will begin to boast that he proved to the wrestling world he is the "true" king of wrestling because the man the WWF saw fit to deem their king was carried out of the arena on a stretcher, due to Lawler.

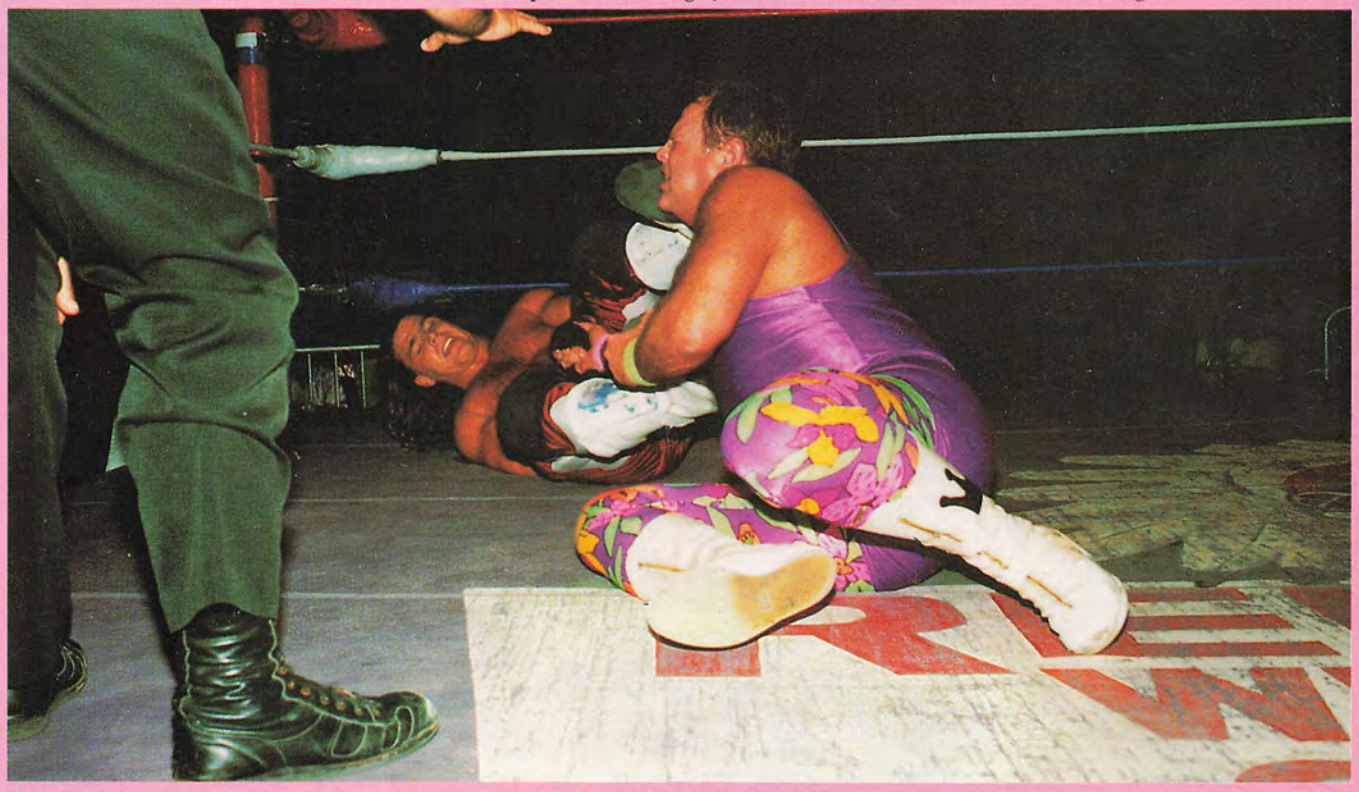
The following evening at the Mid-South Coliseum, Jerry Lawler was back on his home turf. The fans cheered him as he made his way to the ring to challenge Papa Shango for the USWA Heavyweight Championship. Many people in the crowd had to have seen Lawler's actions the night before, but didn't seem to care. He was still "our Jerry" and he could do no wrong. Most experts fully expected Lawler to go on to defeat Shango and regain the USWA World Title for the upteenth time—but not this time. Lawler got caught playing dirty, he threw fire at Shango, the referee saw it and disqualified him for





PHOTOS BY JEFF COHEN, RICH NIEVES and JOHN BARRETT

Shawn Michaels came to Memphis to challenge for the USWA belt and lost to "the King".



illegal tactics. Jerry must have thought he was wrestling in the WWF! But it is just like Lawler to take the shortcut, even in Memphis he won't hesitate to use an illegal piledriver or throw some fire or use a chain to knock his opponent out. Only in Memphis the fans look the other way.

In the WWF the fans don't look the other way, and they have gotten tired of Jerry Lawler's tactics in a quick minute. They shout "Burger King" at him whenever he appears at any WWF arena. They curse him back when he tries to put them down, the fans don't laugh at his little witticisms. Now, WWF fans are demanding Bret Hart get a chance to avenge the attack Lawler perpetrated on him in Dayton, Ohio in June. King of the Ring vs. King in his Own Mind. In the WWF, Memphis' King might prove to be only a Court Jester! ■

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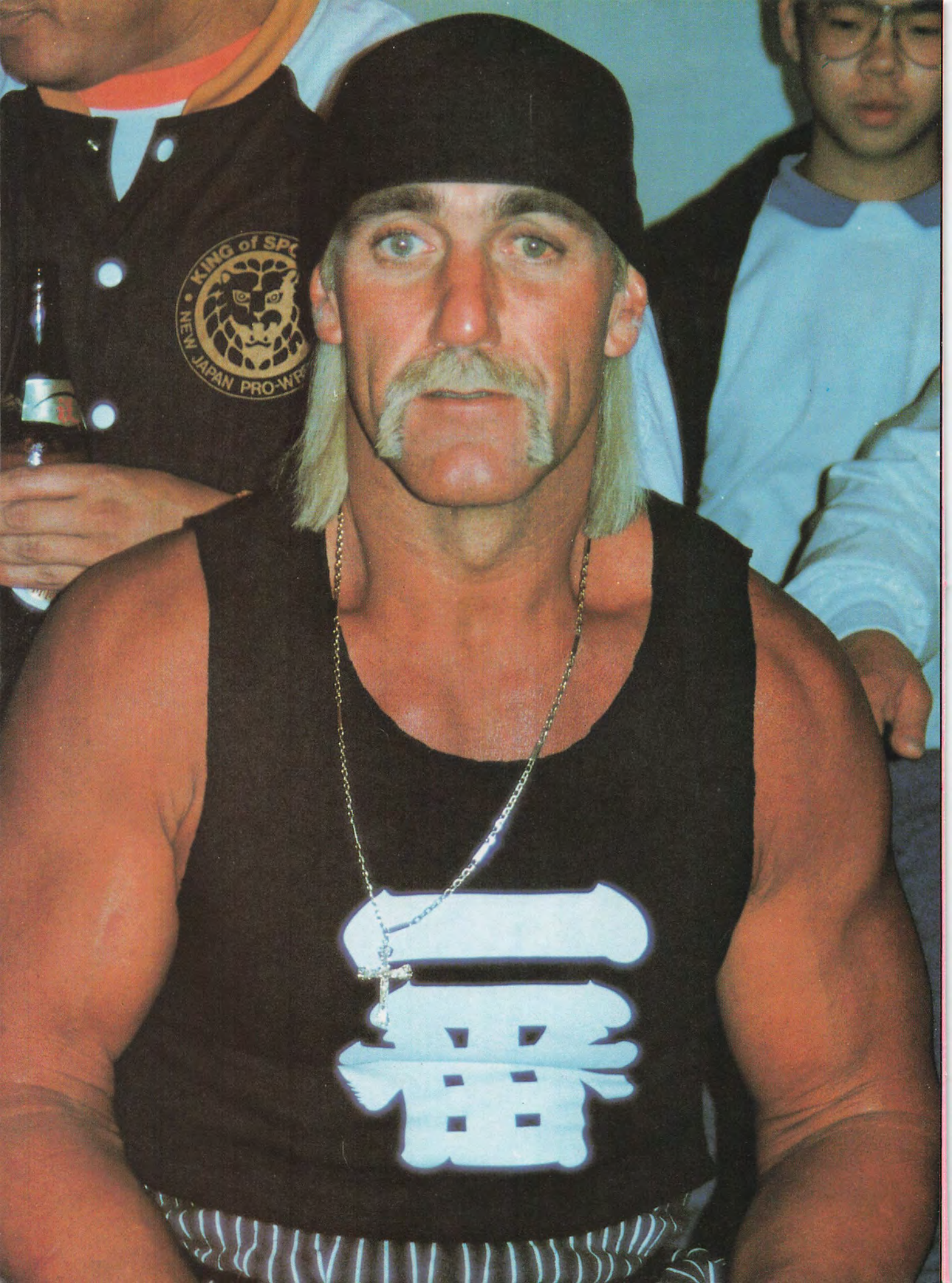
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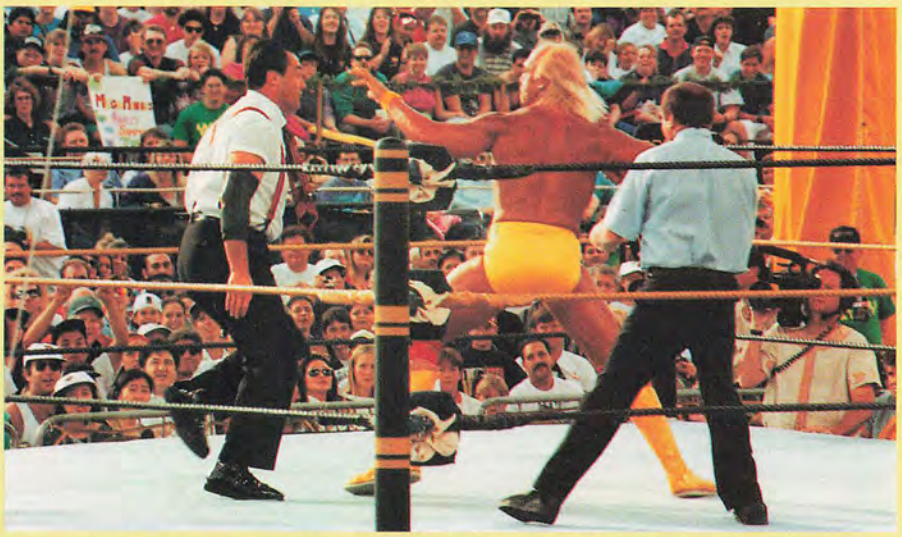
HULK HOGAN MUST DECIDE: Hollywood Or The WWF?

By SANDY KREBS

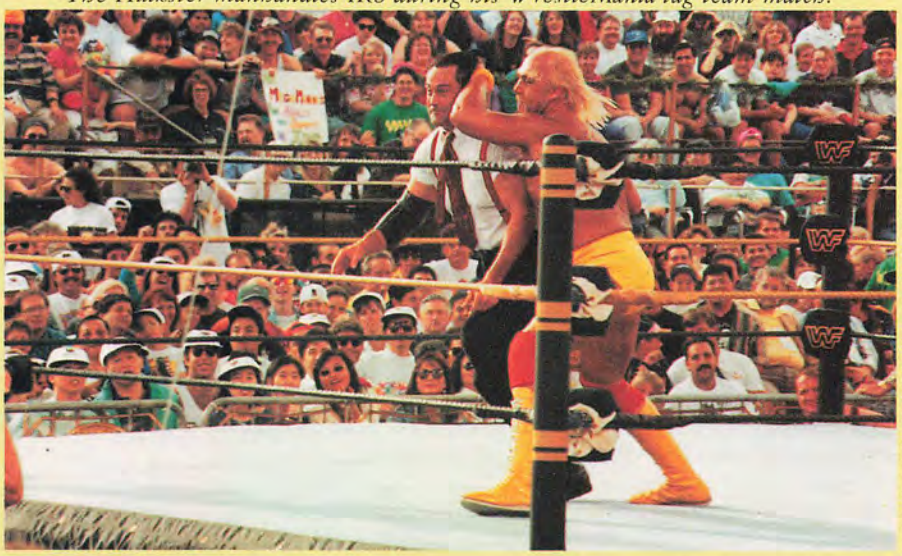
Hulk Hogan won the WWF World Title at WrestleMania then promptly went off to make a TV pilot for CBS television. He defended the belt at "King of the Ring", then left again for Hollywood. Hogan can't have both careers—he must decide which he wants more—fame in the WWF or Hollywood stardom.

Hulk Hogan failed to convincingly defeat Sid Justice at WrestleMania VIII in Indianapolis, and promptly left the federation to go to Hollywood to make a movie called *"Mr.Nanny"*. Almost a year later, the movie still hasn't been released, but will be sometime in June, although the consensus from Hollywood insiders is that the movie is a bomb, and that Hulk Hogan certainly can't act. Something that was very noticeable in his previous movies. It's no coincidence that Hogan returned to wrestling in February, especially after the movie missed its first release date of mid-January. His extra wrestling exposure could only help the box office numbers.

Without even a match under their belts, Hogan and his "friend til the end", Brutus Beefcake snagged a WWF World Tag Team Title match against Ted DiBiase and IRS at WrestleMania, due to the actions Money, Inc. took against Beefcake at a live *"Monday Night RAW"*. This move enraged Rick and Scott Steiner, who were the #1 contenders for the tag straps, and thought *they* were to get a shot at the belts at the WWF's biggest show. That tag title match at WrestleMania proved to be one of the most embarrassing matches on a card full of disgraceful and totally ludicrous bouts, a match in which The Megamaniacs' new manager, Jimmy Hart jumped into the ring, took off his jacket and reversed it showing referee's stripes (pretty amazing, huh?), and counted a pin for his men, then the three Megamaniacs tried to leave the building with the belts. Fortunately, another referee came to the

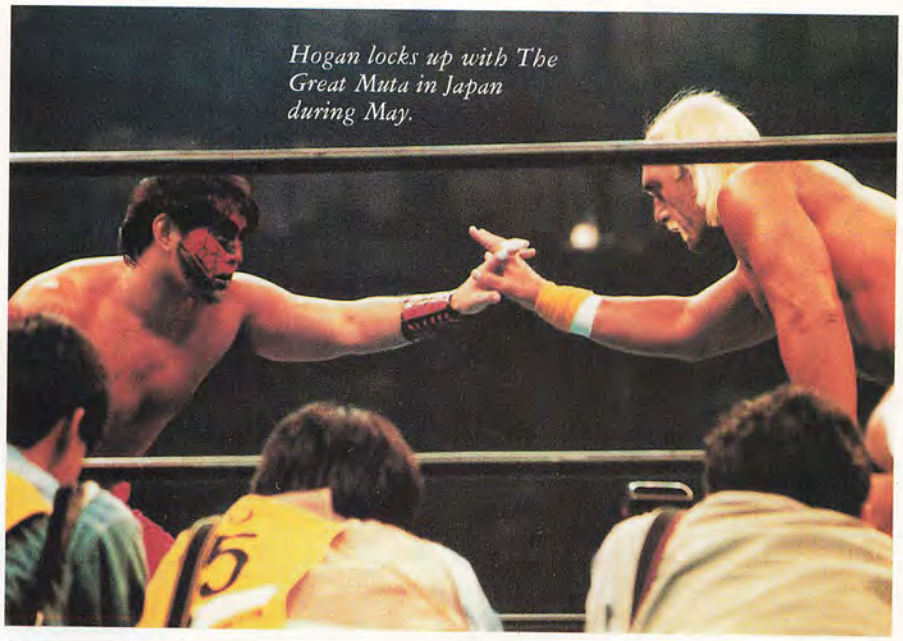


The Hulkster manhandles IRS during his WrestleMania tag team match.

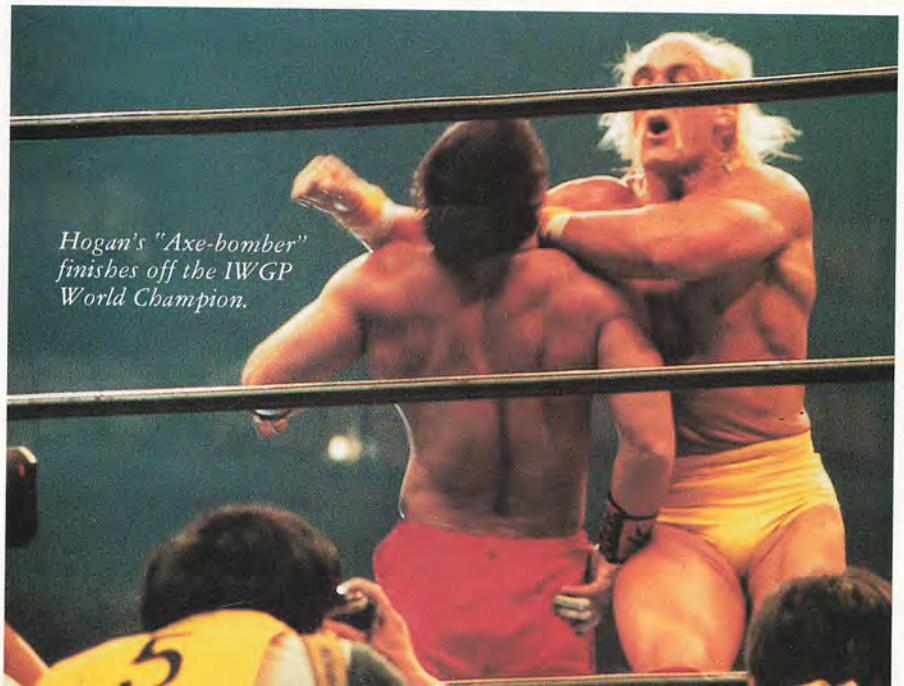


PHOTOS BY H. TAKEUCHI and JEFF COHEN

Hogan takes on both Mr. Fuji and Yokozuna at WrestleMania IX.



Hogan locks up with The Great Muta in Japan during May.



Hogan's "Axe-bomber" finishes off the IWGP World Champion.

ring and reversed the decision. But then, Jimmy Hart threw that referee, Danny Davis, from the ring, and didn't even get censured by WWF management.

Much later in the evening, Hogan made his presence felt in an even bigger way, winning the WWF World Title from very new champion, Yokozuna in an unsigned, unscheduled match. This after Yokozuna had just wrestled Bret Hart in a grueling twenty-minute bout. In an unprecedented move, the WWF allowed this title change, saying Mr. Fuji challenged Hogan verbally and Hogan verbally accepted the challenge, thus a contract was tendered and there was a sanctioned referee in the ring, so the title change stood, and Hulk Hogan was the WWF World Heavyweight Champion for the fifth time. Powerful people can get rules changed in their favor with the right connections!

Today, as I write this story, it is early in June. Hulk Hogan has not yet defended his newly-won title. He is way beyond the thirty-day limit for title defenses, yet he hasn't been stripped of the belt. In a few more days, Hogan will defend his belt against ex-champion, Yokozuna at the WWF's "King of the Ring" tournament. In the meantime, Hulk Hogan, WWF World Heavyweight Champion, has been off making a pilot TV show for CBS, made an appearance in Japan at the IWGP's *Wrestling Dontaku* card in Fukuoka against IWGP World Champion, The Great Muta, and wrestled three WWF tag team matches with Beefcake against Money, Inc. in two days just before Memorial Day. Oh, incidentally, after his match with Muta, Hogan held up his own WWF belt and proclaimed it to be a "toy", telling the Japanese press the IWGP title was the "real World title" (Hogan defeated Antonio Inoki in 1983 in a tournament to be crowned the first IWGP World Champion.) No matter what happens against Yokozuna, Hogan is off to make yet *another* movie the day after the match. He is not scheduled to make another wrestling appearance until mid-July. This isn't what professional wrestling is all about! The World Champion has an obligation to appear on wrestling cards, he is the man wrestling fans pay to see. By not appearing, Hogan is shirking his position as the #1 box office draw in pro wrestling. (But powerful men can have the rules changed, if they have the right

connections and know the right people.)

But that's not what Hulk Hogan wants anymore. What he wants is to be the #1 box office attraction in feature films. A man can make big, big bucks making movies, if he is a draw, and it really doesn't matter very much if one can act. The very biggest box office attractions in movies today—Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jean-Claude Van Damme and Kevin Costner—can't act worth a damn, and two of them don't even speak the language well enough to be clearly understood. It is their images that sell tickets to their movies, not talent. Hulk Hogan has spent the last ten years doing just the same thing. He's far from the best wrestler, he's definitely not the most interesting, but his image and charisma made him wrestling's biggest star ever. But based on mail we received after WrestleMania, Hogan's luster has dimmed tremendously over the years. Not one letter of support was received for Hogan's triumph in Las Vegas, instead the fans accused Hogan of stabbing Bret Hart in the back, by going after Yokozuna the way he did. When Hogan did appear in the WWF in mid-May, attendance for the three shows he was on didn't go up dramatically, as the WWF and Hogan hoped it would, overall attendance for those three shows as compared with each city's previous show was **down**. Wrestling fans are getting pretty tired of Hogan's *schtick*, and it appears Hogan is pretty tired of it, as well. His "Well, you know "Mean" Gene"s don't have a ring of enthusiasm to them at all, the inflection in his voice tells us he would rather be somewhere else rather than with his "good buddy", "Mean" Gene Okerlund.

Wrestling is a full-time occupation, as is moviemaking. You can't do both. Hogan wants it all, and he wants it his way. He's not going to get it. In wrestling, he needs to regain his lost reputation and his legions of fans to stay on top. He can't do that if he's only going to appear once in a while. The fans know when they are being used and will look to other, more dedicated athletes to give their support to. This is how many fans began to appreciate Bret Hart after he became the WWF World Champion. To be a star in movies, Hogan is going to have to work very, very hard. He needs to take acting lessons just to become an actor of the "quality" of those listed above—that's how bad his abilities are in this field. He's going to have to make people *want* to pay to see him in movies, after watching him on TV for free for all those years. In three films so far, and most probably a fourth, he has pretty much failed to do this and that's why he returns to wrestling—he needs to fill the cravings his ego demands for publicity. Wrestling is the only outlet Hogan has to remain constantly in the public eye, wrestling is Hulk Hogan's only claim for fame. Without wrestling, Hulk Hogan is just another strongman on Venice Beach.

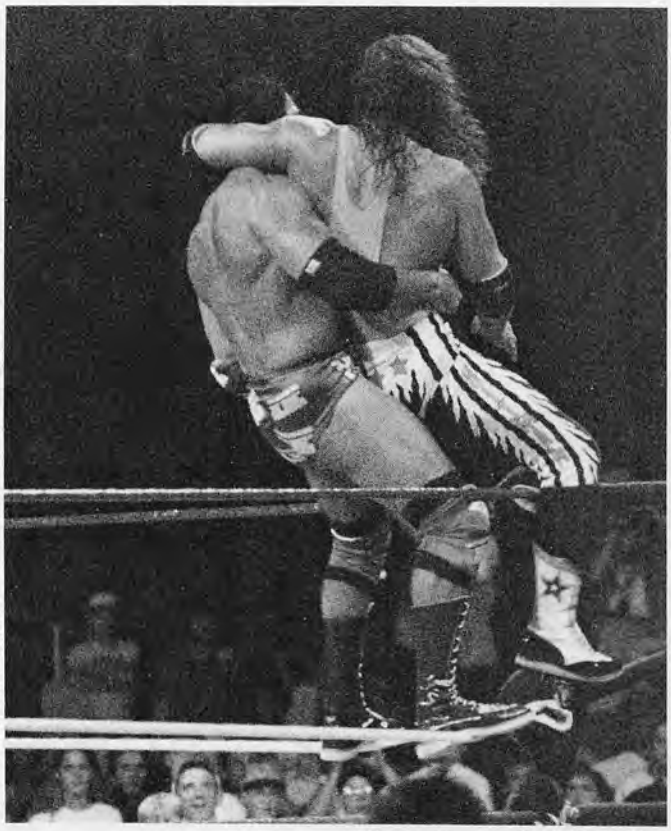
The morning after WrestleMania Hulk poses for a picture his mother is taking for a fan.

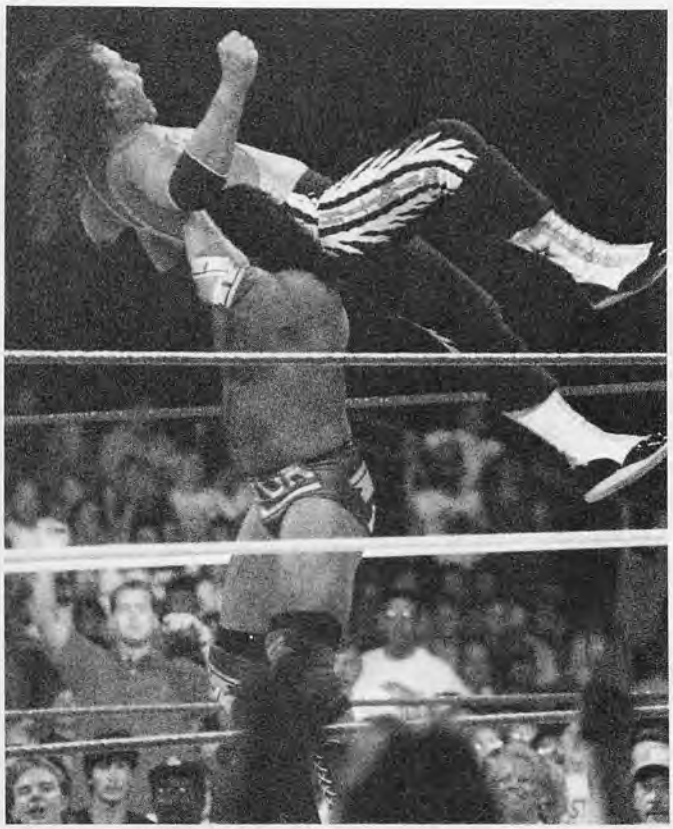
So, Hulk Hogan, it's time for you to decide, what do you want to do with the rest of your life? Do you want to be the most famous wrestler in the world, and reap the benefits of that position? Or, do you want to be an actor in Hollywood, and possibly not be as famous as you are now? You can't have both, this is real life—not Hollywood! ■

YOKOZUNA AND BRET HART:

THE KINGS OF WWF RINGS

By AL McGINESS





PHOTOS BY JEFF COHEN

Razor Ramon brutalized Bret Hart, but still lost in the end.

What purpose is there in having a Dayton, Ohio? There is none! Dayton is a totally useless place called "the heart of the Midwest". Armpits of the Midwest is more like it! I was paid to go to Dayton, Ohio to see the WWF's "King of the Ring" spectacle. Because I was paid to be there, I caught the latest possible flight out of The Big Apple to get there, therefore I missed the dark match. Since I don't speak to the humanoids, I still do not know who wrestled and won, nor do I care. Getting to my seat, I see, a few feet away from me, a Chump Hogan wannabe. At least the idiots sitting in our section were graced with the presence of someone who really matters in this stinking business—me!!

Anyways, to get started we had the first match of the tourney, with the only real class gentlemen in the WWF wrestling each other—Bret Hart and Razor Ramon. Razor worked over a shoulder of Hart's he injured when he threw him into a ring post. But, "the Hit Man" wouldn't quit and came back to get close to a victory on many an occasion. Ramon caught Bret Hart in The Razor's Edge, but Hart became a rare man to escape the hold and almost got a pin. Then Razor took Bret Hart up to the top turnbuckle for a superplex, but Hart rolled it through to get a cradle pinfall and a tremendous victory!

The second quarterfinal match saw Curt Hennig square off with Mr. Hughes. Hughes brutalized Hennig until he crotched himself on the ring ropes. Then Hennig took over. Desperate, Hughes grabbed the urn he stole from The Undertaker and hit Curt with it, getting disqualified.

The brain-dead idiot, Duggan, was next against Bam Bam Bigelow. Thankfully this one was short and sweet as Duggan missed a tackle, hit the ring post and was kayo'ed. Bigelow wanted to destroy the cretin, so he threw a flying head butt at the imbecile before pinning him. Have a nice retirement in the sanitarium, Duggan!!

In the fourth quarterfinal, Flex Loser faced Tatanka, the Redman. The referee made Loser wear an elbow pad to cover the illegal weapon inside his arm, or he would automatically be eliminated from this tournament. Tatanka threw Flex's

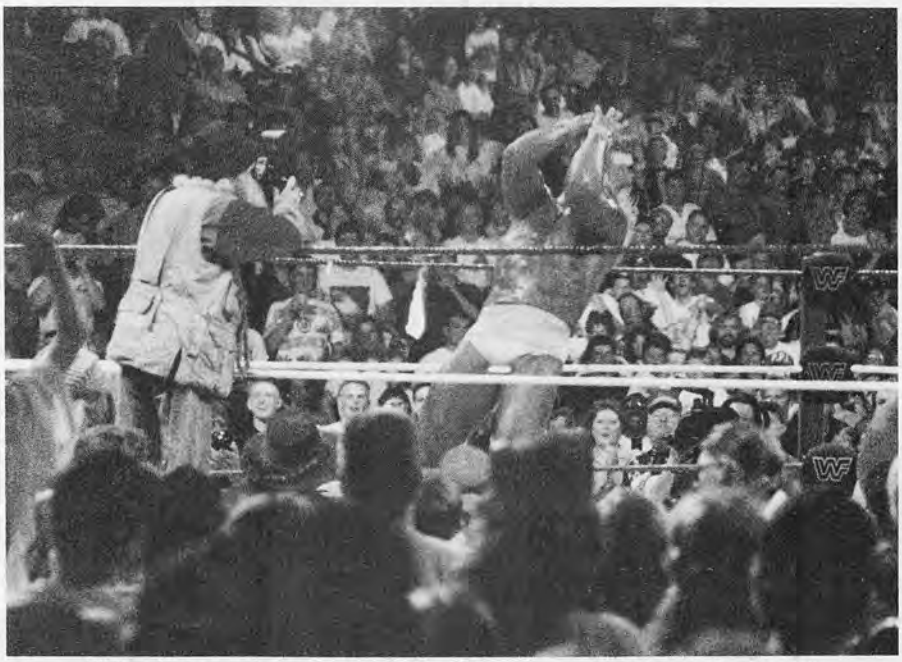
Yokozuna nearly finished off The Hulkster with a bearhug, but Hogan came back strong.

mirror on top of him, destroying it and teaching The Narcissist a painful lesson. For fifteen minutes the egomaniac and the Indian went at it back and forth, near the end Tatanka did everything he could to win—except get the pin. After the bell rang, Loser demanded an extra five minutes, but then took off the pad and sucker-elbowed the savage warrior, knocking him out. The draw eliminated both men and put Bigelow into the final match.

Next was the (now) only semi-final, Bret Hart against Mr. Perfect. The last time these two wrestled each other, Hart destroyed Curt's back and won the Inter-Continental strap at SummerScam '91. Perfect was incapacitated for fifteen months and has never forgotten, although he fools Hart into thinking they're friends. Slime that he is, Hennig ruined this scientific masterpiece by breaking the rules first, kicking Hart when he was re-entering the ring. Later, Hennig kicked Bret Hart off the ring apron, nearly into the crowd, and Bret Hart injured his knee. Hennig went for the win and Bret Hart kept kicking out of the attempts. Bret Hart clamped a figure-4 on the egotist and Hennig was trapped for several minutes before he finally got to the ropes. Hart escaped Hennig's sleeper by getting to the ropes. Finally, Curt thought (wrongly) he had Bret Hart beaten and went for a cradle hold for a pin, but the mighty Bret Hart reversed it to get to the final match. Mr. Perfect was extremely angry and started screaming, but finally Mr. Loser took defeat somewhat like a man and shook Bret Hart's hand.

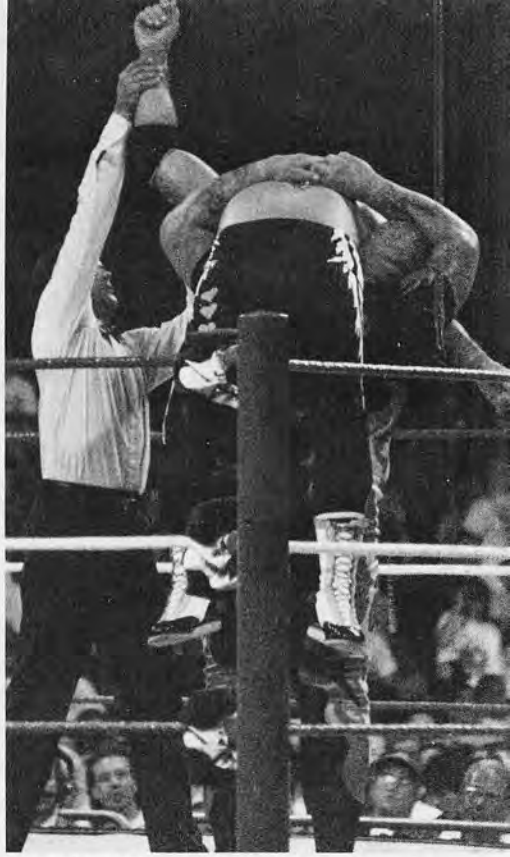
With a break in the tournament came the rest of the festivities, starting with Chump Hogan defending his illegally-won World Title against the man he stole it from, Yokozuna. For the entire first part of the match, Yoko pummelled

Hulk clobbers Mr. Fuji, who doesn't belong on the ring apron.

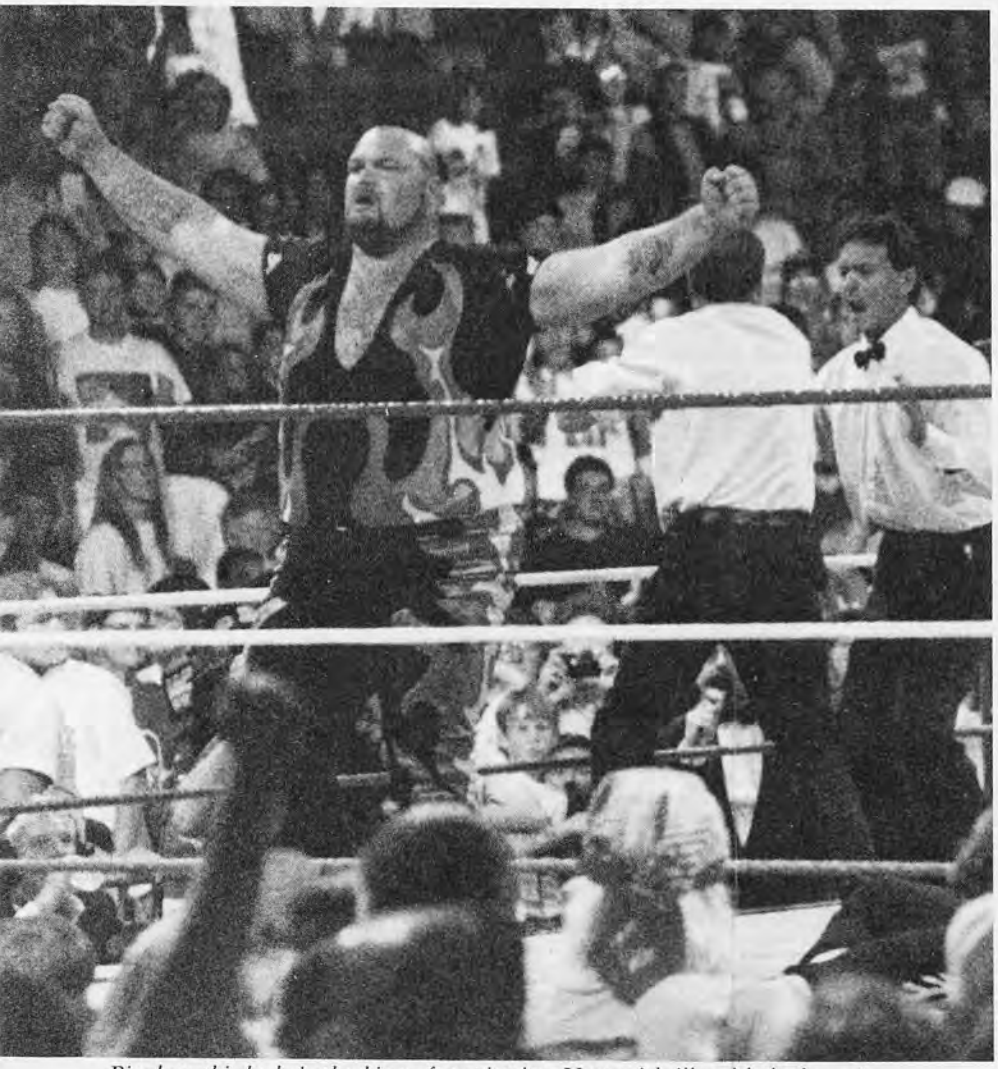


This photographer shot fire in Hulk's eyes, causing him to be pinned.

Bret Hart has Mr. Perfect trapped in a figure-4 leglock.



Bam Bam Bigelow has Bret Hart caught in a backbreaker.



Bigelow thinks he's the king after pinning Hart with illegal help from Luna.

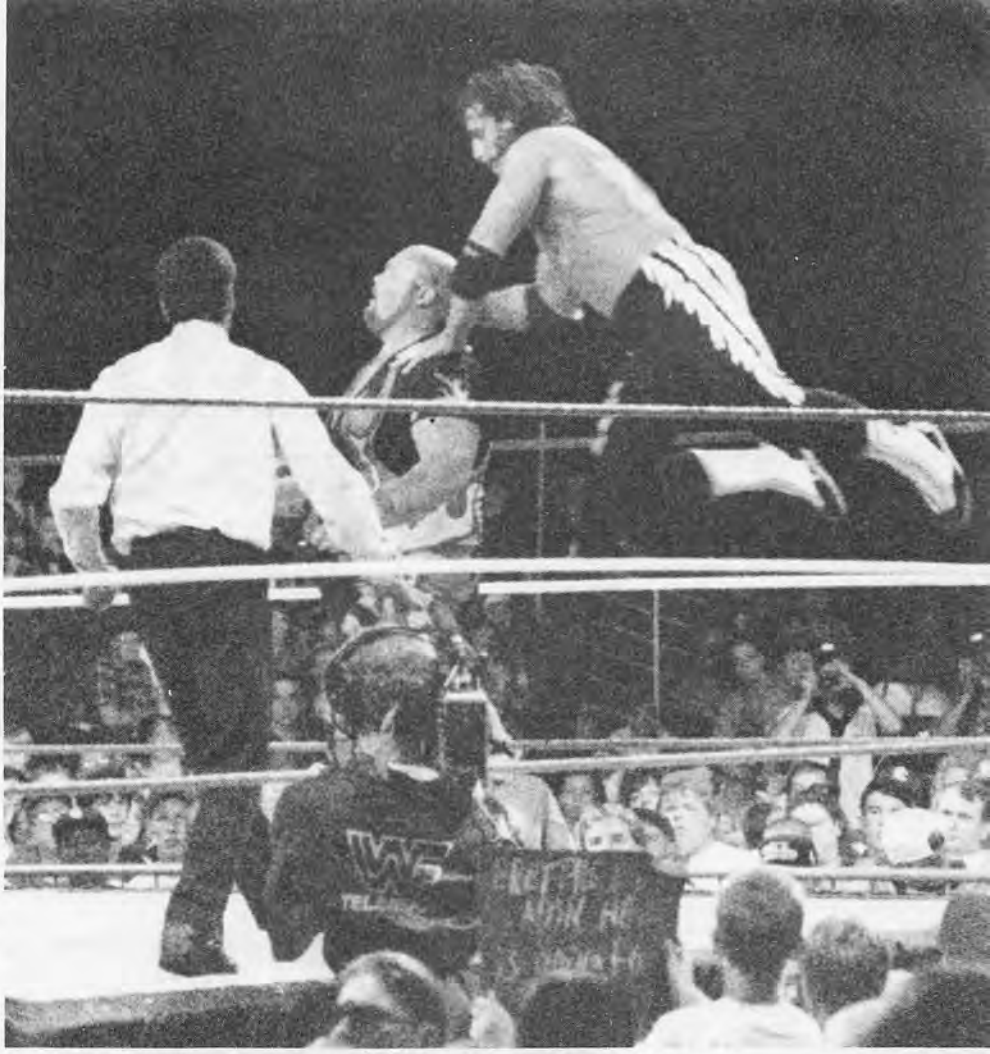
Chump, beating Chump into submission. Rather than pinning the phony, he wanted to extend his torturous revenge. Then he missed an elbow in the corner and was incapacitated for awhile. Yoko came back and put Chump into a bear hug. For five minutes Chump was trapped and I could hear his ribs breaking for the last three minutes. Chump was begging Yokozuna for mercy, but Yoko doesn't understand English!! Finally the bald disgrace got out of the bear hug and started his usual showboat comeback, however, when he went for the legdrop, Yoko kicked out of the pin. One of the ringside photographers got up on the ring apron, as the ringboys tried to pull him down, he flashed a ball of fire from his camera into Chump's eyes!! Chump Hogan went down in pain and Yokozuna quickly went for the pin and got it for a tremendous victory!! Yoko and Mr. Fuji celebrated in the ring, they had righted a tremendous wrong. The Hulkaholics in the crowd, especially the loser sitting near me, were crying their tears as they watched their phony being carted from the ring, like the trash he truly is. Good-bye, Chump, see ya in Hollywood, you worthless piece of *&#%$!!!

The 8-man tag match came next pitting Money, Inc. and The HeadShrinkers against The Steiner Animals and The Smoking Guns. A tremendous upset took place here as one of the Guns pinned Teddy D.B. for a victory, thus getting themselves World Tag Team Title shots against the masters. If I were The Steiner Animals, I would have decimated the cowboys then and there for robbing me

out of my rightful title shots, but these two are imbeciles and didn't take advantage of their partners' inexperience.

The I-C strap was up next as newly-recrowned champion, Shawn Michaels faced off with the Hawaiian Volcano, Crush. Michaels was forced to put up the strap by the corrupt WWF hierarchy which doesn't want the pretty-boy to have the valued belt. As expected, Crush was devastating Shawn, but then Crush confronted Michaels' new bodyguard, Vinnie Vegas, the Great Wall of China. Then Vegas occupied the referee while Michaels cheated in the ring, but Crush couldn't be stopped. It was obvious there was going to be another new champion!! As this was going on, the two Doinks came down to ringside. Crush climbed to the top rope to confront them and turned his back on the wily champion. As he was screaming at the Doinks, Crush got superkicked from behind. The imbecile was out cold and cost himself the victory, as Michaels took the easy pin and saved his strap for another time.

Finally, the match to name the new WWF king—Bret Hart vs. Bam Bam Bigelow. Bret Hart could barely walk and Bigelow was well-rested. Bigelow took it to Hart the entire first part of the match, but Bret Hart refused to lose. Luna Vachon, as beautiful as ever, came down to ringside and clobbered Bret Hart with a chair. Bigelow went up for the flying head-butt and then pinned Bret Hart for a tremendous upset, but one of the evil twin referees came to the ring and restarted the match. Bigelow had Bret Hart in a backbreaker for four minutes as he tried to cripple "the Hit Man" forever, but Bret Hart finally flipped out of it. Bret Hart barely escaped a Biglow splash, but was placed in another backbreaker. He escaped that one as well and put Bigelow in a sleeper. Bigelow was put on the defensive, but Bret Hart couldn't beat him. Finally Bret Hart maneuvered Bigelow into a flying cradle hold and got the pin to become "WWF King of the Ring". As he was being coronated by "Mean" Gene Okerlund, Jerry "the Queen" Lawler came out and disrespected Bret Hart. Then "the Queen" attacked Bret Hart, smashed the crown, pounded him with the sceptre and threw the throne on him. Lawler disgraced Bret Hart, who was left laying on the steps to the throne. But "the Queen" better watch out!! Bret Hart will be looking for you from now on and he has more skill than you could ever hope to have. If it comes down to "King vs. Queen", Bret Hart will take your crown and expose you for the disgrace you really are. Queen, you should have stayed in Memphis, where the promotion is in your pocket, not come to the big-leagues and mess with the best star in the sport today—Bret Hart! ■



Hart comes off the ropes to ram Bigelow into the mat.

Jerry Lawler intruded in Bret's moment of glory and left him laying.

TRACY SMOTHERS: CHAMPION OF THE SOUTH

By CARLIE GILL

Tracy Smothers and The Dirty White Boy are feuding over the Smoky Mountain Wrestling Heavyweight Title. Whether he has the belt or not, Tracy is recognized by his Southern fans as a true champion.

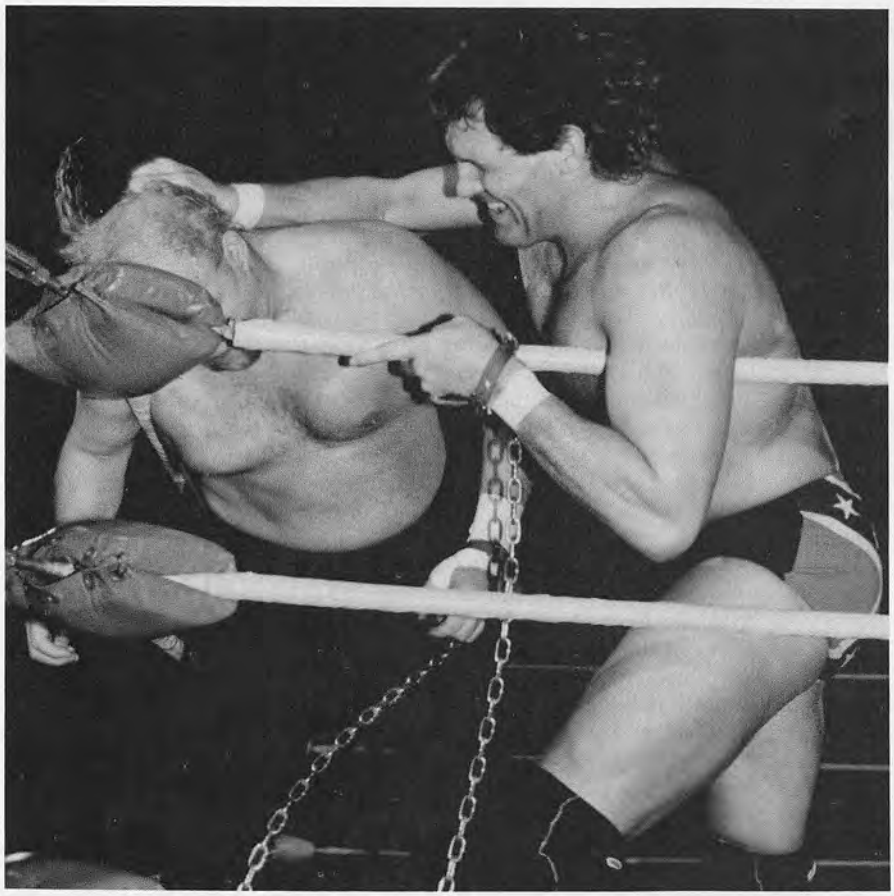
Remember Tracy Smothers? He burst into WCW in 1990 with partner Steve Armstrong as the Wild-eyed Southern Boys. Their enthusiasm and work ethic quickly made them one of the most respected tag teams in the promotion. It didn't, however, make them one of the most popular. Fans in the North hated this duo, mostly because of their Confederate flag waving "southernness". WCW management requested that Smothers and Armstrong change their ring image to the cowboy-type "Young Pistols", hoping this would change the team's fortunes. It made things worse, suddenly the fans in the South hated Smothers and Armstrong too.

Bitter, the pair decided to embrace the fans' dislike for them and began doing things in the ring to warrant the hatred. But this new "attitude" never set well with either man. Steve, as the son of the legendary Bob Armstrong, had been raised to respect the sport of wrestling, and seemed to feel he was letting his family down with his behavior. And Tracy Smothers, a decent human being at heart, just didn't have the vindictive personality to continue being something he wasn't. That spelled the end of the Southern Boys/Young Pistols.

That turbulent period in the life of Tracy Smothers has led him to Smoky Mountain Wrestling, a feud with The Dirty White Boy and, for the first time in his career, total and complete acceptance with fans who love his "Southern Boy" persona. In a promotion that also boasts The Rock 'N' Roll Express, it is Smothers whom fans come out to the arenas to see.

When Smothers entered SMW in late 1992, he knew he had to make a quick

Tracy Smothers has The Dirty White Boy trapped in a corner and pounds away.



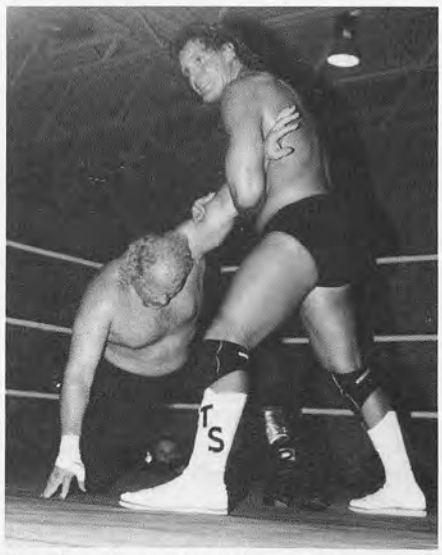
Smothers tries to make The Dirty White Boy bleed.

impression on the fans. While in WCW he had fallen into a deep slump and suffered losses left and right, often to people he should have easily defeated. His status as a "rising star" in professional wrestling was in jeopardy, and if his slump continued, any chance of getting his career on track would be gone.

When Tracy won the SMW "Beat The Champ" TV Title, he broke out of his slump in a big way: by pinning Paul Orndorff and Dirty White Boy in his final two tournament matches. The TV title in SMW is different than the one in WCW in that the titleholder only holds the belt for a maximum of five title defenses. The goal is to win each title defense (which is worth $1,000), and if the champion successfully wins all five defenses he wins $10,000. When Smothers beat The Dirty White Boy, White Boy didn't care as much about the TV Title as he did about the money he wasn't going to get a chance to win. In DWB's mind, Smothers had cost him $15,000, and he wasn't going to let Tracy get away with it. And so began the White Boy—Smothers feud.

Tracy had successfully defended his TV title four times when DWB and manager, Ron Wright came for revenge. Prior to a match Smothers had scheduled with The Night Stalker (now Atom Bomb in the WWF), White Boy attacked. He battered

Smothers comes flying off the ropes to get White Boy for the pin.



Smothers has White Boy caught in an armbar.

Smothers all over the arena, leaving him in no shape to defend his title. Tracy was pinned by Night Stalker and lost the TV title. Moments afterwards, DWB jumped into the ring and went after Smothers again. What happened next had the SMW fans in a frenzy: White Boy grabbed Smothers' Confederate flag and burned it, a slap in the face to the people of the South, although the true merits of something as controversial as the Confederate flag are suspect, to say the least. After that, DWB disavowed his Southern roots and proclaimed himself as being from New York City, complete with a New York Yankees baseball cap. Being a proud Southerner, Tracy Smothers suddenly had a two-fold mission: capture the SMW title from Dirty White Boy, and defend the honor of his Southern heritage.

Match after match between DWB and Smothers was signed but, because of Mr. Ron Wright, the belt stayed with DWB. Wright seems harmless enough, sitting there all broken down in his wheelchair. Outside of his annoying interviews—griping about his many ailments—he couldn't possibly cause any trouble, right? Not quite. During a televised Smothers/DWB title match, the "invalid" Ron Wright got out of his wheelchair and interfered to allow DWB to keep the title. Wright will tell anyone who will listen that he was having chest pains, blacked out and, if he indeed *did* walk, it was a true miracle that occurred, just when White Boy needed him most!

But there was nothing Wright could do in Pikeville, Kentucky on April 2nd when Tracy Smothers defeated DWB in a chain match to win the SMW title. It was the biggest victory of Tracy's career and vaulted him back into star status. By winning the most important title in the most exciting

and competitive wrestling promotion in the United States, he finally shrugged off all the doubters who had been on his case since his WCW stint. As the SMW Champion, and as a successful competitor overseas for Japan's W*INGS promotion, Tracy served notice he was coming into his own.

Due to a recent match in Johnson City, Tennessee, Tracy is no longer SMW Champion. White Boy isn't champion, either, because the belt is held up. Matches between the pair have become so heated the officials are unable to keep track of both participants and manager Ron Wright. SMW will have to decide the fate of the SMW title soon, and would be well-advised to consider not signing any more matches between the two—once the belt is around the waist of one or the other. Even the most die-hard SMW fan will grow tired of seeing the same two wrestlers fighting over the belt over and over again.

With Tracy's recent string of success it seems likely he will wear the SMW title belt again soon. But even if he isn't the champion, he is a champion of another sort—he's the champion of the South and that probably means more to Smothers than any title belt in the world. ■

PHOTOS BY JO ELLEN HALLMARK and STEVE STOGDALE

Smothers uses the Confederate flag as a weapon.

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GEORGEOUS MICHELLE STARR:

MAKING CHAMPIONSHIPS A FEMININE ART

By STUART KEMP

PHOTOS BY STU KEMP

Michelle Starr recently won the WCCW Heavyweight title in British Columbia.

He debuted in the ring after extensive training with California native Billy Anderson at 19 years of age in a tag team loss with Anderson in Southern California. That loss meant nothing as Michelle Starr travelled to Mexico in the first few months of his career to battle and feud with the legendary KISS.

The battle raged on for a long while and ended when Starr lost a hair vs. hair match in 1988, and then decided to head north. In 1988 he arrived in British Columbia, Canada and began wrestling for All Star Wrestling promoted by Al Tomko. When he arrived on the scene, he quickly captured 1/2 of the International Tag Team titles and was instrumental in interfering in a number of matches. The San Francisco native, who had arrived wearing a few stars on his tights and face, had been somewhat transformed as he started to wear mascara and lipstick as well!!

His transformation led to a number of challenges by other wrestlers who made fun of the new Michelle Starr, and it led to a number of losses by the opponents in such matches as "Loser wears makeup" in which Starr offered a number of the losers flamboyant and colorful shades of rouge, lipstick and eye shadow.

Starr was asked by a number of promoters to see if he could match up to their competition. Michelle travelled to a number of states in the Western U.S., such as Oregon, Washington, Idaho and others and was a top contender for titles in each of those territories.

With the closure of a number of regional offices due to the sweep of the World Wrestling Federation presence, Starr concentrated on the scene in British Columbia and captured another tag title, this time with Vicious Vern Siebert. That title would be the last under All Star Wrestling's banner, because in 1990 All Star had decided to close its office, too.

A new office quickly opened up and saw Michelle Starr and Vern Siebert become the tag team champions in the newly-formed Pacific Coast Championship Wrestling and they were hotly contested by The Plowboys. Starr and Siebert saw to

Starr defeated The Mighty Quinn to win the belt.

them right away, and Starr began his own makeup school in the ring. Marty Masters and Dale Houston (Plowboys) were humiliated by Starr as he beat them physically and then added his version of a makeover in front of a very disgusted crowd.

Starr wasn't that mean however, he had a more feminine side and couldn't understand the fans' reluctance to side with him in his display of wild color. The feather boa, the pink and purple tights, the lipstick, he thought might give some badly needed color to those who wore what he thought were boring, dismal shades.

As Pacific Coast Championship Wrestling closed, another promotion would live. It would be called West Coast Championship Wrestling and, in 1991, that promotion would forever change the way Michelle Starr would be.

Starr chastised those who dared break ties with him, one being Diamond Timothy Flowers, a wrestler for some 14 years on the scene around the world, but primarily B.C. The result was some of the most brutal, bloody matches that had ever been seen on the West Coast.

His feud with Flowers continued for some time, but Starr wanted more and a title was more to his liking. Along came Playboy Buddy Rose, a wrestler who had competed in West Coast Championship Wrestling for just six months. The two became a tag team and were competing in a tournament when West Coast Championship Wrestling went on tour. Among the wrestlers were Starr and Oly Olsen, who was WCCW Champion.

In somewhat of a shock, Starr beat Olsen on the first night of the tour and relished his win. But like so many wins, a loss must follow and it did for Starr, who saw his title slip away on the last night of the tour. But he would remain undaunted in his quest for another title.

Buddy Rose and Starr were now a cohesive unit, with the two ending up as one of the finalists in a tournament to crown new tag team champions. They fought the Olympian Mike Roselli and Black Superman Mighty Quinn. The loss was due to lots of interference, mainly their own, but the match lasting nearly thirty minutes proved that Starr and Rose would be back. On the next card in Cloverdale, B.C., the home of WCCW, Starr and Rose captured the tag team belts. Sure there was lots of controversy and bad feelings about it, but Rose and Starr had done it. For Starr, he became the first man to hold both the tag team titles and the Heavyweight crown.

Along the way, Moondog Moretti and Diamond Timothy Flowers had become a leading team for the titles and, without warning, took the belts in a one match only stipulation. The team of Starr and Rose would be no more, but they did break amicably, and it left Starr on the singles trail once again.

It had been awhile since he had challenged for the title. Oly Olsen had lost the title to Akam Singh, who had been stripped of the title for missing a defense date, and it left the title held up. Starr quickly took the top contender position and challenged the other top contender, Black Superman Mighty Quinn.

The first meeting was a tar-and-feather match for the title that saw Quinn not only win the title, but also get to tar and feather Starr's manager, Johnny Flash, and Starr, as well. Starr had an ace in the hole, the Samoan Hitman, who attacked Quinn, then along with Starr, tar and feathered him. Their next match was a Ghetto Street Fight which saw everything found in a street inside the ring. Starr again had an ace up his sleeve, when he had Samoan Hitman hidden under the ring for the whole card just to help out if there was a problem and, boy, was there! Quinn had hurt Starr badly and Johnny Flash wasn't able to help, but Hitman was, and he beat Quinn senseless, that is until Quinn's friend, Johnny Canuck helped out. The next match was a chain match, again close but no cigar for Starr, who, by this time, was getting just a little worried that his rank would drop soon with losses in the matches with Quinn.

Their final bout was a match held inside a steel cage, and as we go to press, we have just learned that Starr has beaten Quinn for the belt. Indeed, it is a shock. Few details are known as the match just recently ended, but again it appears that outside interference has been the key. This will make it two titles in the heavyweight division for Starr and one tag championship.

Plans for Starr in the future include the hope of travelling to Europe and Japan, two territories that he has never been to. He would like to show the real man of the 1990's to the areas that have never seen the San Francisco Fashion Plate, and he looks forward to showing off his makeup tips and fashion designs.

Like him or not, he is one of the top wrestlers in Western Canada today, and has the potential for a career spanning at least another 15 years, and he figures that he'll still be Gorgeous. Conceited? Perhaps, but one of the toughest conceited wrestlers around. He is Gorgeous Michelle Starr!!! ■

Starr beat Oly Olsen to win the WCCW belt for the first time.

SLAMBOREE '93: A LEGENDARY WEEKEND

By SANDY KREBS

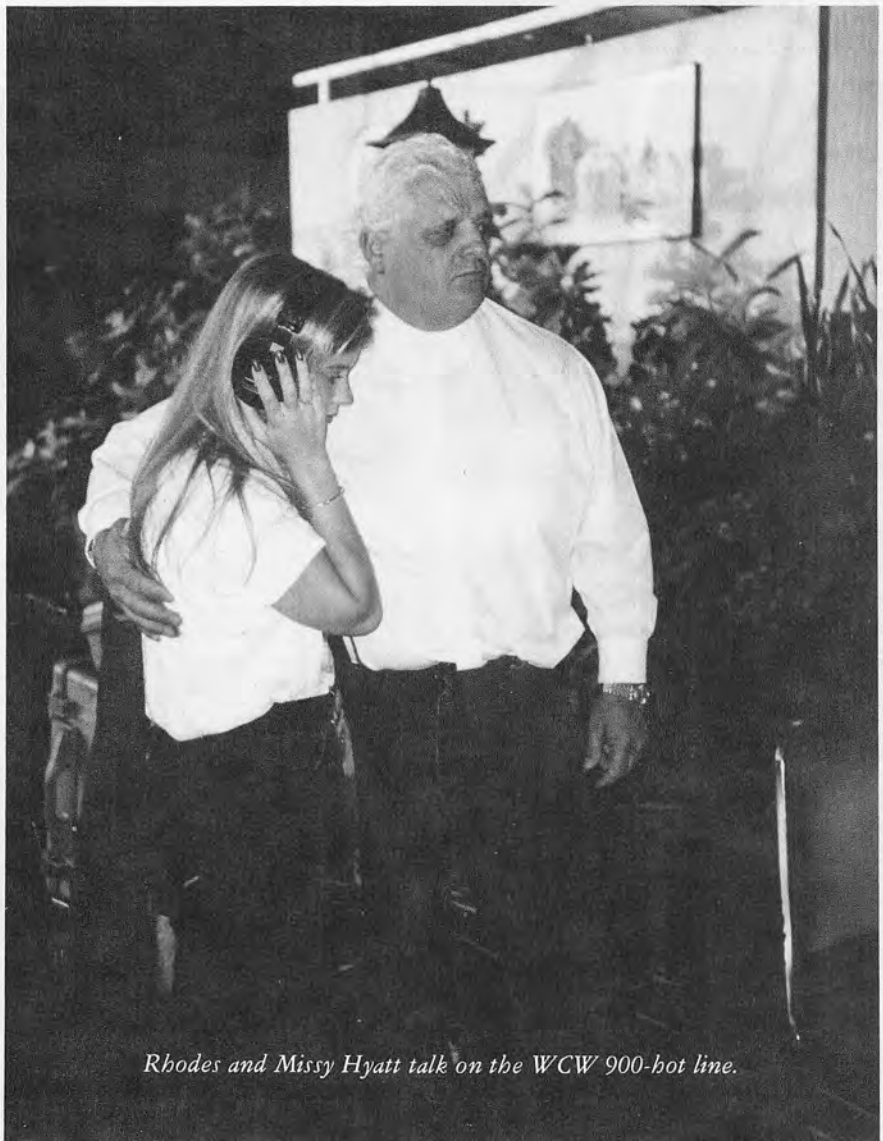
PHOTOS BY DENNIS BRENT and JO ELLEN HALLMARK

It isn't often when today's professional wrestling pays homage to its past, but WCW did just that this past May when it held Slamboree '93 at Atlanta's Omni in conjunction with a legends of wrestling reunion held throughout the entire weekend. For many fans the highlight of Slamboree was the dinner held on Saturday night where they could meet and eat with the old-time grapplers at CNN Center. Over 200 fans came to the banquet and met legends such as Johnny Valentine, Mr. Wrestling 2, Lou Thesz, Dory Funk Jr., Blackjack Mulligan, Mad Dog Vachon and Verne Gagne. WTBS, as well, had cut-ins from the banquet on the Saturday evening wrestling show and a good time was had by all. The festivities didn't end when the banquet did, as many of the wrestlers held forth in the Omni Hotel lobby until the wee hours of the morning, reminiscing about the past.

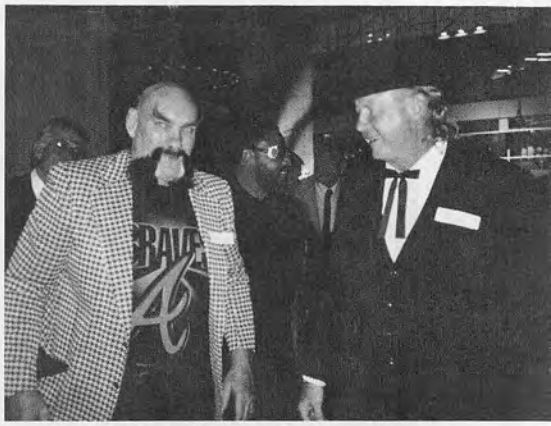
But the main reason to be in Atlanta was for the wrestling card which was held on Sunday night. WCW World Champion, "Big" Van Vader was to defend his title against Davey Boy Smith and NWA World Champion, Barry Windham was going to defend his belt against his old tag team partner from The Four Horsemen, Arn Anderson.

In the opening event, 2 Cold Scorpio and Marcus Alexander Bagwell defeated Beautiful Bobby Eaton and Chris Benoit to stake a claim as the #1 contenders for the tag team belts held by The Hollywood Blondes, Steve Austin and Brian Pillman. Scorpio pinned Benoit in what has to be regarded as a major upset. Col. Rob Parker brought Sid Vicious back to WCW and Sid made very short work of Van Hammer with a power bomb. In the first of three legends' matches, Wahoo McDaniel, Jim Brunzell and Blackjack Mulligan fought to a double disqualification against Jimmy Snuka, Don Muraco and Dick Murdoch. In the second legends' match Thunderbolt Patterson and Brad Armstrong beat Ivan Koloff and Baron Von Raschke. Brad replaced his father, Bob Armstrong, who was injured a few weeks earlier by The Heavenly Bodies in the SMW. Ric Flair introduced the newest member of The Four Horsemen, Paul Roma, in his "Flair for the Gold" segment. The fans did not seem happy with Flair's choice. In the final legends match, ex-

Joe Blanchard greets John Tolos and Dusty Rhodes.



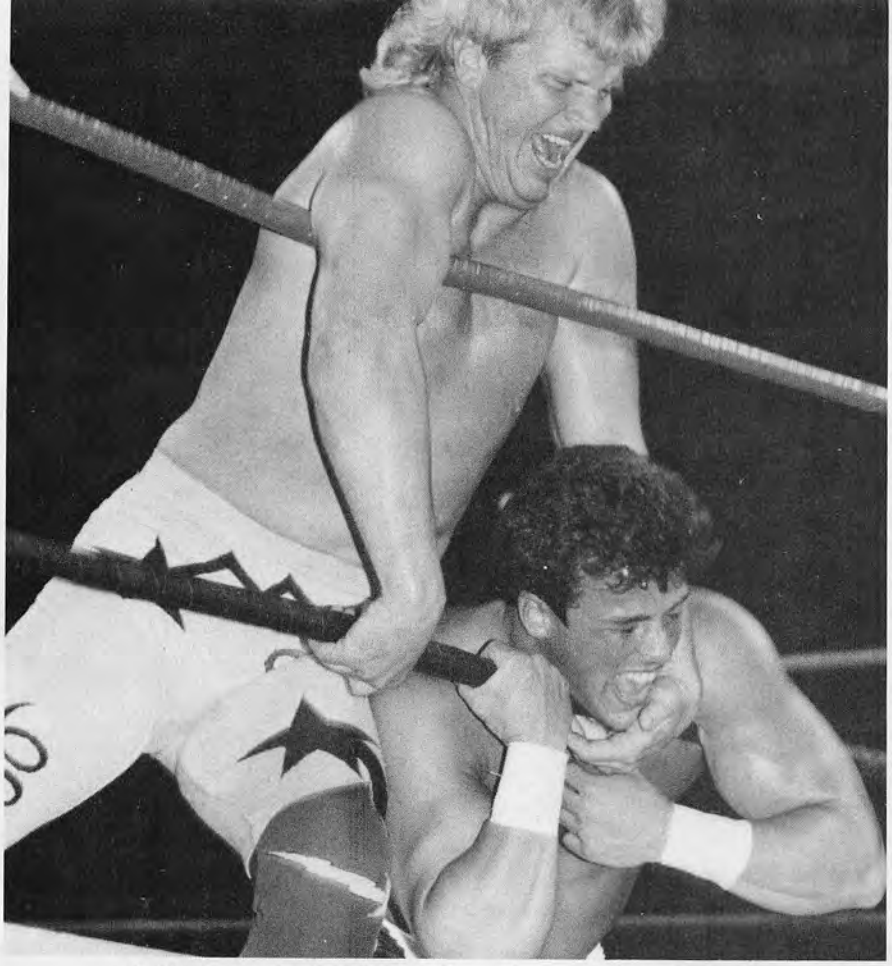
Rhodes and Missy Hyatt talk on the WCW 900-hot line.



Ox Baker says hello to Dory Funk Jr. at the Omni Hotel.

NWA World Champion, Dory Funk Jr. fought ex-AWA World Champion Nick Bockwinkel to a time limit draw. Funk had the man he beat for the title, Gene Kiniski in his corner, while Bockwinkel had his long-time rival, Verne Gagne in his corner.

Back to the modern era as Ravishing Rick Rude and Paul Orndorff defeated Dustin Rhodes and Kensuke "Power Warrior" Sasaki when Rude pinned Sasaki. The WCW made the first four inductions into its Hall of Fame next, and the four honorees were introduced in the ring—Lou Thesz, Mr. Wrestling 2, Verne Gagne and the late Eddie Graham. Sting wrestled Nailz the Prisoner next and beat him handily. Nailz replaced Scott Norton, who quit the WCW earlier in the week.

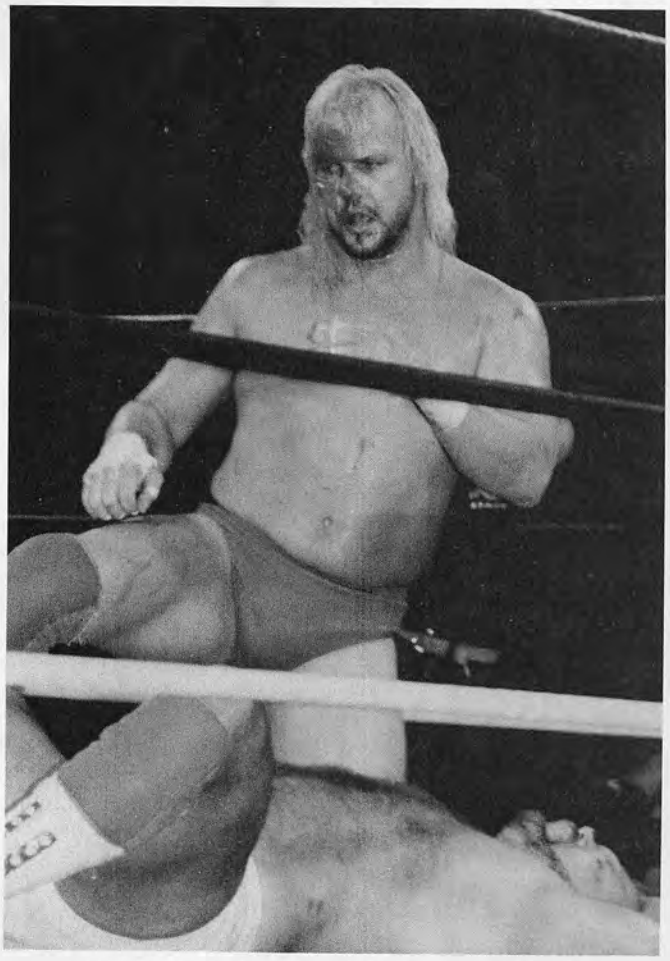


Bobby Eaton chokes Marcus Alexander Bagwell on the ropes.

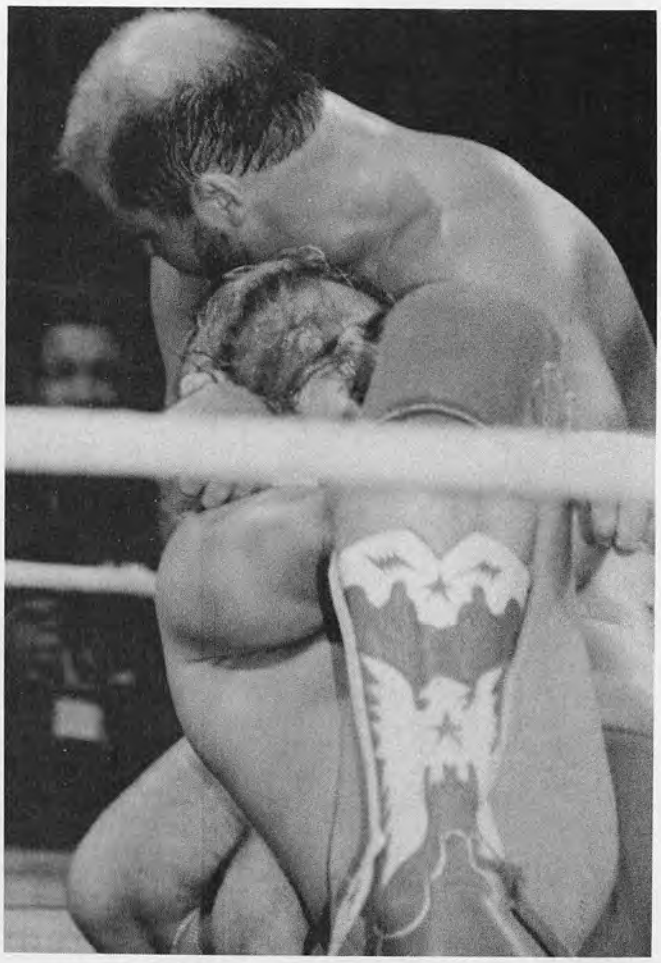
The unified tag champs, The Hollywood Blondes, defeated Dos Hombres to keep the belts. In the first of the two world title matches, a very bloody Barry Windham retained his belt by pinning Arn Anderson. In the WCW World Title match, "Big" Van Vader held onto his belt via a disqualification over Davey Boy Smith.

It was really a nice touch that WCW management decided to honor many of wrestling's greats the way that they did and gave them one last moment in the spotlight. Many of the old-timers feel they weren't appreciated enough and the positions they had in building pro wrestling into what it is today are mainly ignored. This was one way for wrestling to pay back the veterans for all they did for the sport while they were in their primes. It was also good to see WCW invite men who weren't part of the NWA, which dominated the southern part of the country. Men such as The Crusher, Verne Gagne, Mad Dog Vachon and Jim Brunzell might not have wrestled regularly in the NWA, and might not have been known by many of the fans in Atlanta, but they played major roles in shaping the sport and deserved to be honored, as well.

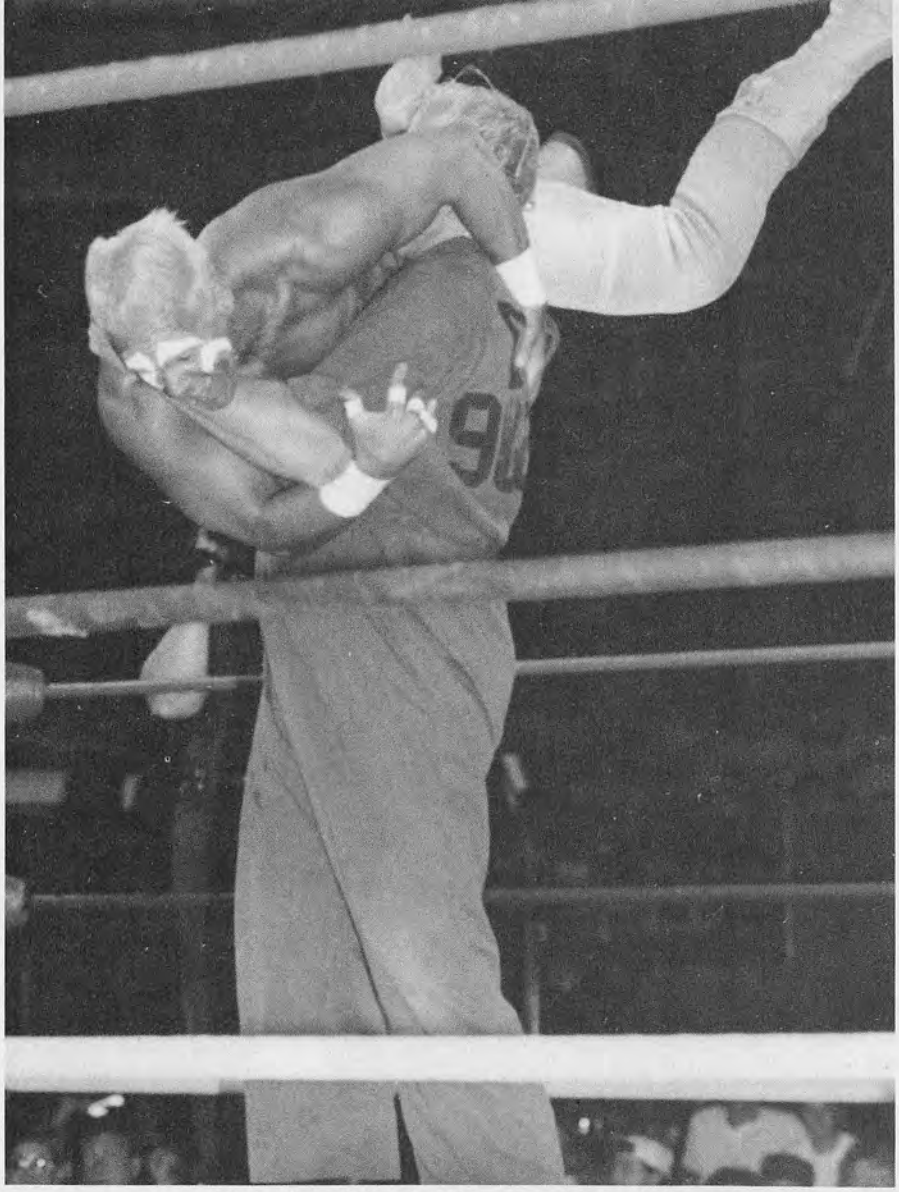
Hopefully, Slamboree will become a major part of WCW's schedule and will continue to be held each and every year in the future. ■



Arn Anderson had Barry Windham very bloody.

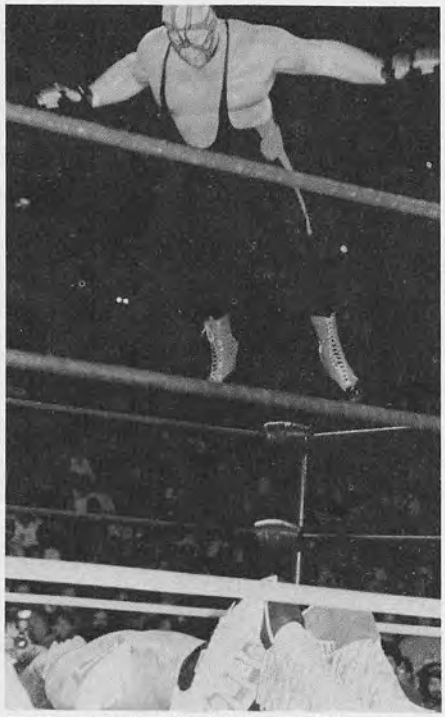


Arn has Barry trapped, but Windham kept his belt.



Nailz slams Sting, but Sting beat him quickly.

Vader goes to superplex Davey Boy off the ropes.



Vader splashes Smith, but still lost on a disqualification.

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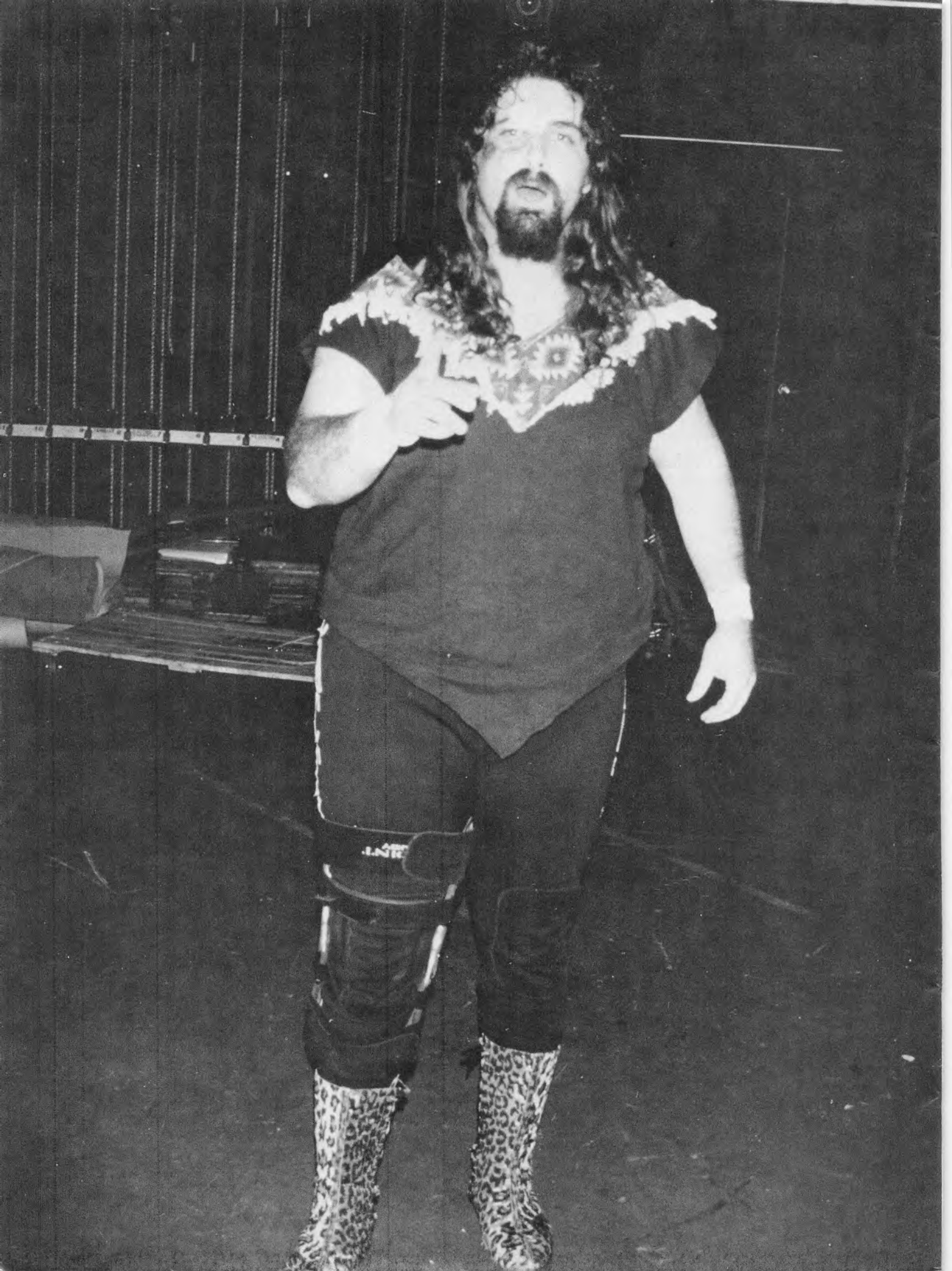

CACTUS JACK:

"I'M COMING BACK TO GET YOU VADER!"

By KEITH CURTIS

To get revenge for losing to Cactus Jack on TBS, WCW World Champion "Big" Van Vader and his manager Harley Race tried to end his career the next week. They under-estimated Cactus, they put him in the hospital, but he refuses to quit and he's coming back to get Vader, as soon as he can!

Harley Race pulled back the mats separating the concrete floor and the wrestlers. "Big" Van Vader picked up Cactus Jack, turned him around and prepared to deliver a power bomb on the concrete. It didn't matter to Vader that he had already beaten Jack into submission, he just wanted to end this upstart's career. You see the week before, Cactus Jack had the audacity to challenge the World Champion to a match on TBS-TV and managed to pull off a tremendous upset when Vader was counted out of the ring, while writhing in pain from a Cactus Jack moonsault from the ring apron. Vader likes to hurt people, he doesn't like to be hurt, and he demanded a rematch to settle the score. It didn't matter to Vader that he had fractured Jack's cheekbone and broken his nose in the first match. Cactus Jack was still wrestling, and that would not do! So, as a nation watched in horror, Vader crashed down on the concrete with his power bomb, and Cactus Jack landed with a sickening thud. Vader and Race cackled over their fallen opponent, he wasn't

PHOTOS BY JOHN BARRETT, RICH NIEVES, HOWARD BAUM & JO ELLEN HALLMARK

Despite still wrestling extremely aggressively, Cactus Jack has become a huge fan favorite in WCW.

Jack sends Rick Rude flying to the canvas.

Cactus has an elbow saved for Vader.

Will Jack be as aggressive after the beating he took from Vader?

getting up—his career was over, now back to Sting and Davey Boy Smith!

Doctors and ring attendants rushed to ringside, Cactus Jack was unconscious, but still breathing. An ambulance was called and the doctors stabilized Jack's neck to prevent any further damage. Forty-five minutes later, the ambulance finally took Cactus Jack to the hospital, it took that long for the preparations to be done which enabled Jack to be lifted off the floor into the ambulance. He was very seriously injured.

Later, it was determined that Cactus Jack had suffered a concussion and some compressed vertebrae in his neck. His physicians suggested to Jack that he retire from the ring, if he re-injured himself, he could become paralyzed. Those doctors don't know what kind of man Cactus Jack is. First of all, Cactus Jack is certifiably insane, there are already several screws loose in his mind. Secondly, because he isn't too well-adjusted, Jack enjoys the pain, both given and received. He wasn't going to let this stop him. Thirdly, his idols in wrestling were Bruiser Brody and Terry Funk, men who would never think of letting an injury stop them from getting into the ring. Those injuries would just make those two fight harder to make their opponents suffer. So it was actually a foolish suggestion, Jack is not quitting, and Vader is in for a serious surprise.

We managed to reach Cactus Jack at his home in Georgia, and found him to be somewhat lucid and relaxed. He told us he was coming along well, and he thought he would be back sometime during the summer. Besides all the injuries Vader inflicted upon him, Cactus Jack also had an injured hip and a knee which needed to be operated on. When he does step into the ring again, Cactus Jack will be completely healthy for the first time in years (from the neck down, that is!). He appreciated all the letters that came into the WCW offices wishing him well and begging him to come back, and said he wouldn't let his new-found fandom down. And, he wanted us to relay this message to "Big" Van Vader and Harley Race: "Vader, I thought you understood me. We were friends once and you appreciated me for what I was. You should have known you couldn't put me out of wrestling. Now it's time for payback and payback is a real bitch. First, Race, I'm gonna get you, just because I don't need you sticking your two cents in around the ring. Then, Vader, I'm gonna drop the elbow on you and drop it and drop it and drop it again, until I'm sure you're not moving anymore. Then, I'm gonna pin you in the middle of the ring and take that strap that holds up your fat stomach. Then, *you'll* be carted off to the hospital, and I promise you, Vader, you won't be back! You thought you finished me off, Vader, but you didn't! Now, I'm coming back, and I'm coming to get you, and get you bad!! Bang, Bang!!"

We've watched Cactus Jack wrestle for years and years and have always appreciated the effort he put into each match, if not his lack of scientific skill and grace. He has always given his all in every match, for big crowds and small. He has always been an intense competitor, if not always the most successful, and he has never backed down from a challenge. Now, he is facing his biggest challenge, WCW World Champion, "Big" Van Vader, the danger to his health, and the facing of his mortality. We can't say for sure Jack can back up the words and challenge he has issued, but we know he will do his best and that Vader will know what it feels like to be in pain and suffering. We wish Cactus Jack good luck in his endeavors and hope he isn't being too foolish in his quest and thirst for revenge. ■

THE CLASSIFIEDS

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HAS MONEY, INC. BEEN DUCKING THE STEINERS?

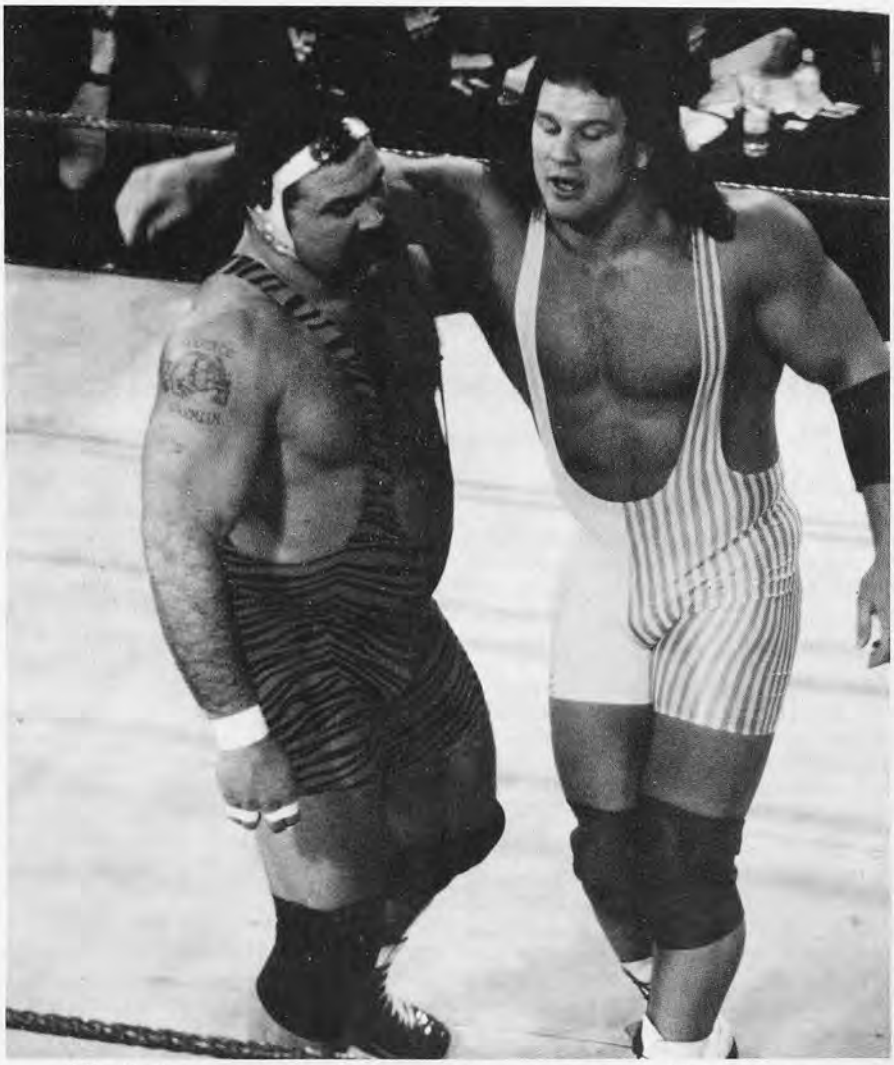
By KEITH CURTIS

Rick and Scott Steiner are the #1 contenders for the WWF World Tag titles held by Money, Inc., but haven't been receiving their earned title shots. Is Money, Inc. ducking the Steiners?

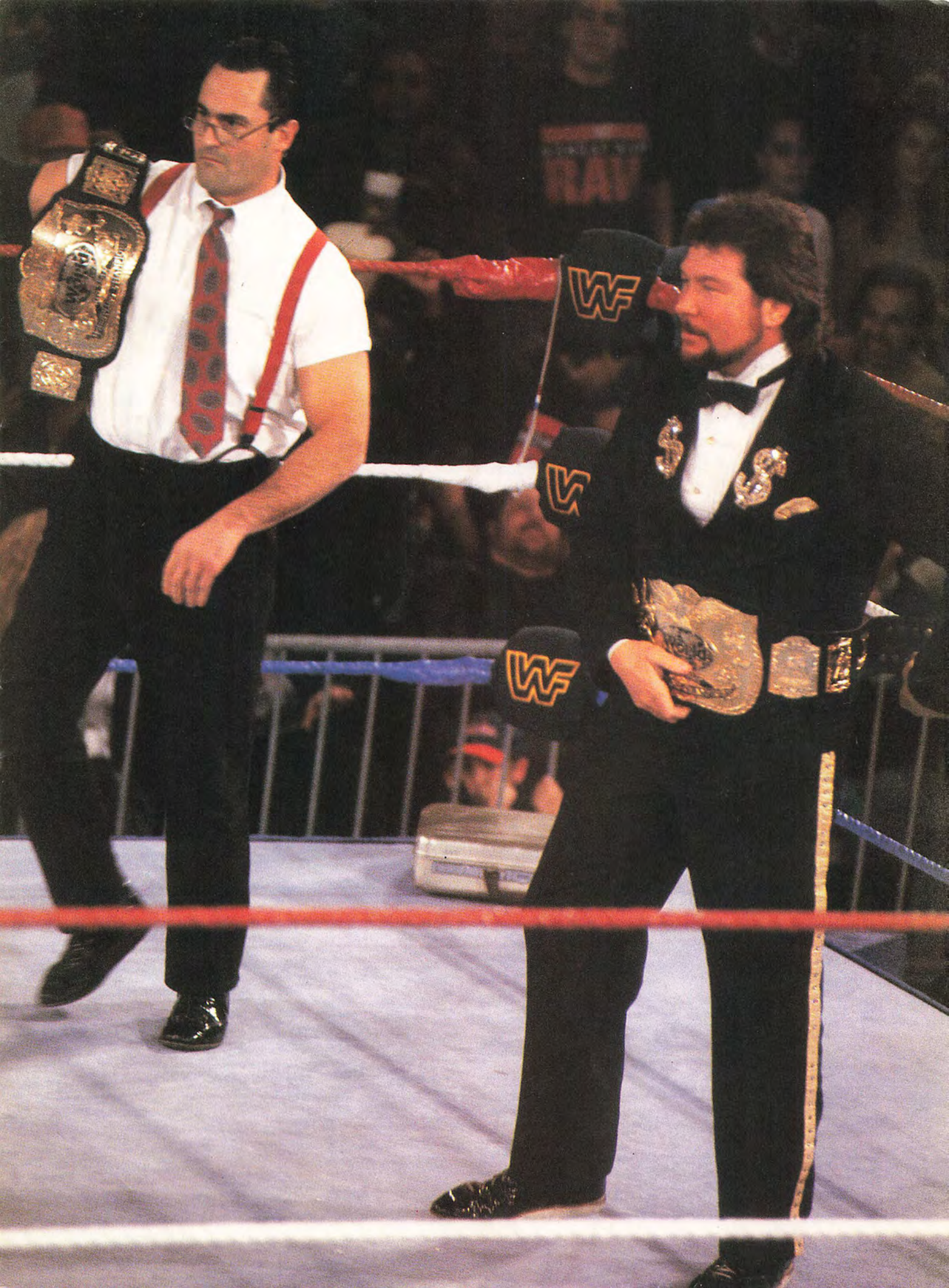
Rick and Scott Steiner came into the WWF late in 1992 looking to dominate the federation as they had WCW, where they gained a reputation as the best tag team in the world. Months later, their reputations have been shattered, they have not dominated the tag ranks and have not beaten Money, Inc. for the tag team titles they had hoped to have by now. The reason they aren't the champions is because Money, Inc. doesn't give them shots at the titles, although Rick and Scott are the #1 contenders for the belts.

Instead, Money, Inc. has been defending the titles against men such as The Beverly Brothers, far from the top contenders, Brutus Beefcake and Hulk Hogan, a team that doesn't deserve to be wrestling for titles as they haven't teamed often enough, and Bret and Owen Hart, who also don't team up often enough to qualify for title matches. Instead of World title matches, Rick and Scott have been thrown into the ring against The HeadShrinkers, the team they beat at WrestleMania IX to earn their status as #1 contenders to Money, Inc. Unlike WrestleMania and in WCW, the Steiners have found it to be rough going against the two Samoans, as they have lost almost as many matches as they have won, and thus Rick and Scott are losing part of their reputation as the "world's best tag team".

With the result at the "King of the Ring" tournament, which saw one of The Smoking Guns pin Ted DiBiase to win the 8-man tag match, it appears the Steiners will drop further away from title matches,



The Steiners were upset about not getting a title shot at WrestleMania.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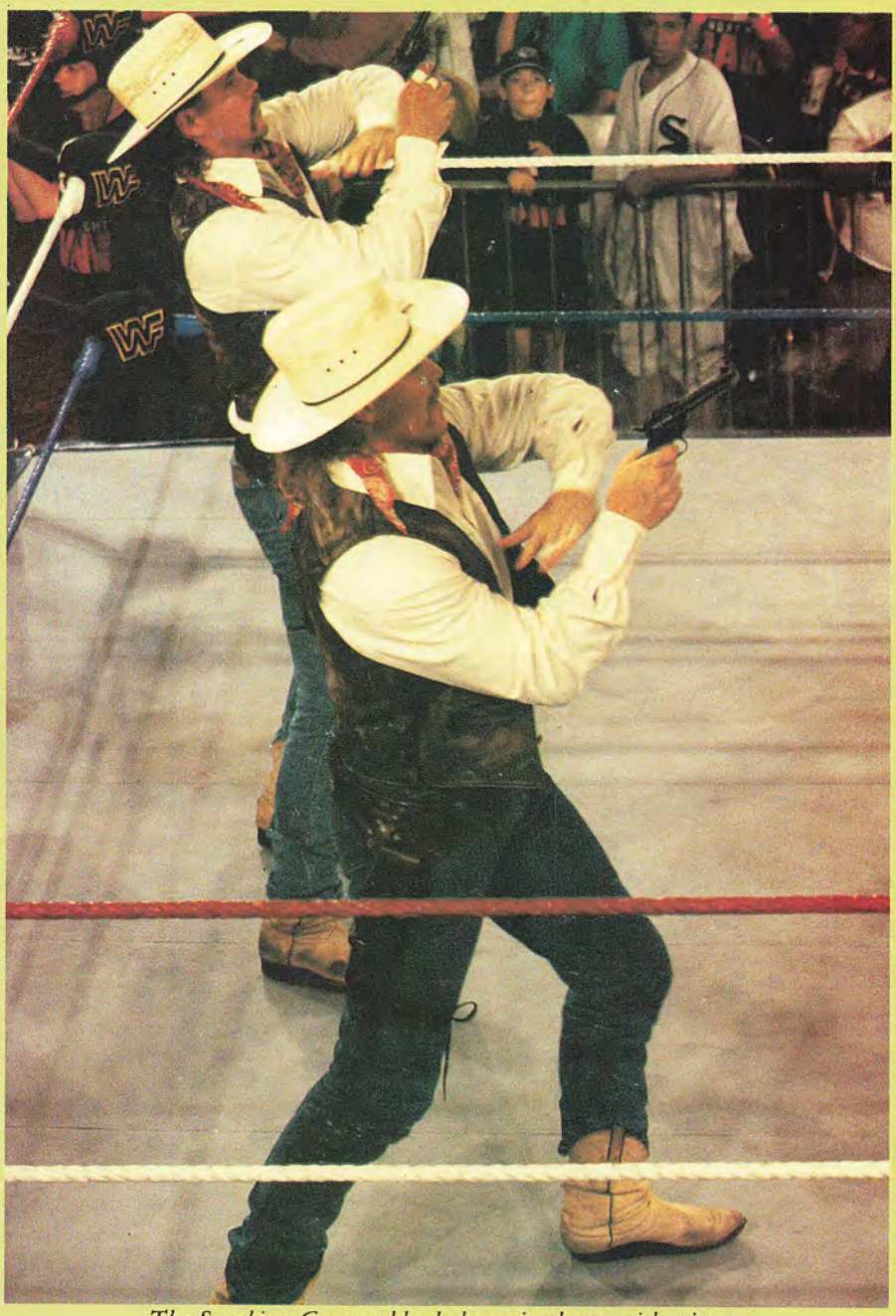
Money, Inc. takes turns punishing Brutus Beefcake with an Abdominal Stretch.



The Smoking Guns suddenly loom in the tag title picture.

PHOTOS BY RICH NIEVES, JOHN BARRETT and ED RUSSINO

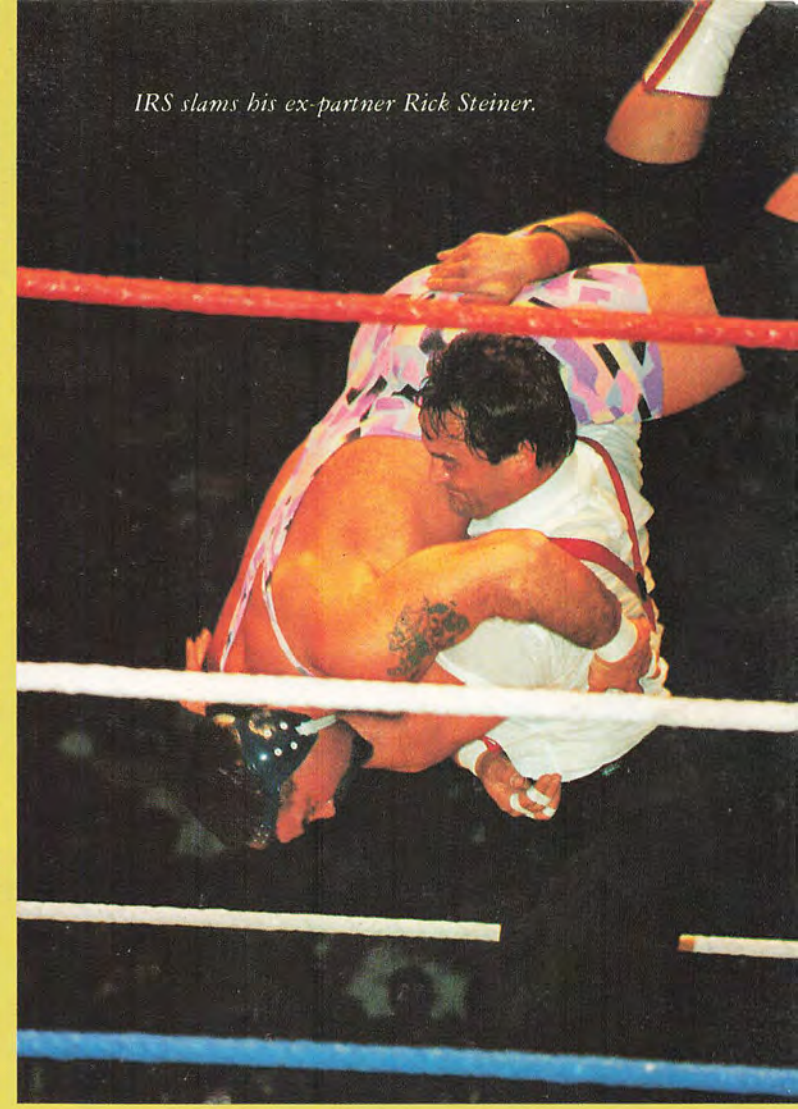
as Billy and Bart Gunn will demand (and probably receive) title shots against Money, Inc. now. Where does this put Rick and Scott Steiner? It puts them up a creek without a paddle.

No one knows why the Steiners haven't been receiving their World title shots since WrestleMania IX, but their downfall didn't start there, it actually started *before* WrestleMania, when the Steiners felt assured they were going to get their first shots at the belts at WrestleMania. Then Brutus Beefcake unretired and was double-teamed by Money, Inc. at Monday Night RAW, which brought Hulk Hogan out of *his* retirement and a challenge was made and accepted by Money, Inc. to fight Hogan and Beefcake at WrestleMania. Rick and Scott Steiner were none-too-pleased to learn they lost their status as #1 contenders to Money, Inc. to a team that hadn't wrestled together in years, and didn't hesitate to let WWF management know how they felt. The WWF responded by creating a #1 contenders match between The Steiners and The HeadShrinkers at WrestleMania IX. With their victory, the Steiners were assured of their long-awaited title shots at Money, Inc., or so they thought.

In the two months since WrestleMania, there have been very few Steiners/Money, Inc. matches and most of them were non-title matches. These matches usually ended with a Steiners' win via a DQ, but the rematches for the belts have not been coming. Why? Is Money, Inc. ducking them, or what?

We asked a well-known wrestling personality, who knows all four men, for his opinion on the situation and this is what he told us (unfortunately, we must keep his identity a secret since he is still a major star today): "I believe if push comes to shove, DiBiase and IRS will put up the belts, but only if they were forced to. DiBiase well remembers Rick Steiner from the UWF, and, of course, IRS teamed with Rick as The Varsity Club in WCW. Neither man wants to get into the ring with the belts on the line. The Steiners have a reputation of hurting their opponents in the ring. They enjoy inflicting pain and punishment on them. Rick's clothesline is devastating and Scott's Frankensteiner is the hold of the '90s. DiBiase and IRS have been pretty much coasting throughout this title stint and the fire might not be there anymore. The Steiners have something to prove in the WWF, that their reputations were earned and deserved. They are still hungry, even with all the success they have attained in the past. Money, Inc. isn't hungry anymore, if they can get away with not defending the belts against the #1 contenders, while still fulfilling the requirements of holding the belts, that's what they are going to do. It is really up to the

The Steiners still had to wrestle The HeadShrinkers after beating them at WrestleMania IX.



IRS slams his ex-partner Rick Steiner.

promotion to force DiBiase and IRS to defend the belts against Rick and Scott, or strip them of the straps. But apparently, the WWF is afraid of having DiBiase slap a lawsuit on the organization, if they confront him like this. Therefore, we are at a standoff—the WWF vs. Money, Inc. vs. Rick and Scott Steiner—and Money, Inc. is winning the battle, while the Steiners are losing the war. If you are asking me if Money, Inc. is ducking the Steiners, I have to say yes."

The WWF has to force this match to take place, but are they willing to do so? Management is more than a little miffed at Rick and Scott for being so outspoken about what took place at WrestleMania, and may want to humble the Steiners just a bit. In the meantime, it looks as if the Steiners will continue to do battle with The HeadShrinkers and other secondary WWF tag teams, while Money, Inc. will be content to teach The Smoking Guns a thing or two about titles and what it takes to get one. ■

(ed. note: Just as this story was being filed we learned that Rick and Scott Steiner defeated Money, Inc. to win the WWF Tag titles at a TV taping in Columbus, Ohio.)

IRS has Steiner trapped in a headlock.

EXIT

DUSTIN RHODES:

THE REAL U.S. CHAMPION

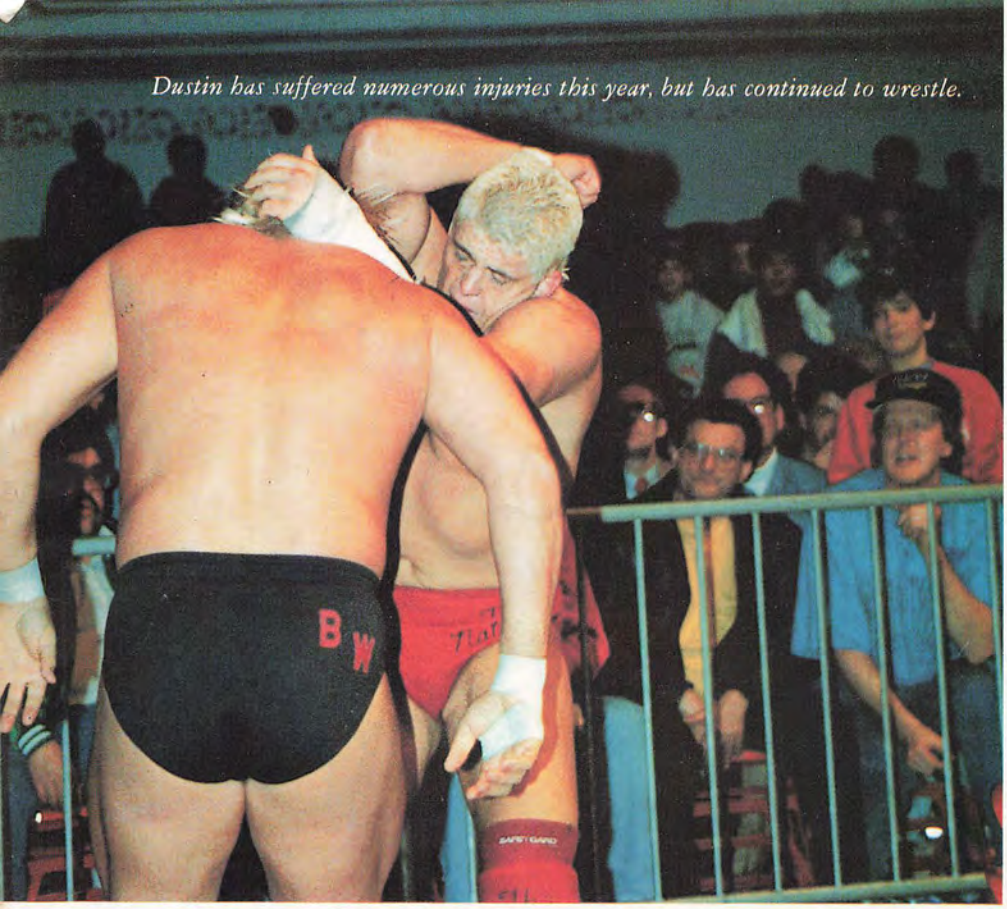
By SANDY KREBS

PHOTOS BY RICH NIEVES, ED RUSSINO and JOHN BARRETT

"Ravishing" Rick Rude has the belt, but Dustin Rhodes has the title. Rude says he is the "real" WCW U.S. Champion, saying possession is 9/10's of the law, but the law states the man* recognized *by the sanctioning body is the real champion. In the WCW the man recognized as their U.S. Champion is Dustin Rhodes. Nice try though, Rude!

Dustin Rhodes has come a long way in his short career as a wrestler. Early in his career, he was derided by wrestling "experts" who claimed he was being "protected" by his father, Dusty, who was guiding his son into territories he was wrestling in, then being protected from tough competition by The American Dream. True, the youngster didn't have the greatest wrestling skill, nor the best body in the sport, but he tried very hard to overcome the prejudice against him (sound familiar, Erik Watts?). In another time, young Dustin would be sent to smaller wrestling federations to learn his craft and gradually move up into more important territories, against better-skilled competition and pay his dues. But in the late '80s, there were few small promotions to appear in, there was the PWF in Florida (where Dusty was), the USWA in Memphis and Dallas, and that was just about it. Dustin had already appeared in the NWA, but left when his father did. It appeared he couldn't make it on his own, especially when he turned up in the WWF with his father.

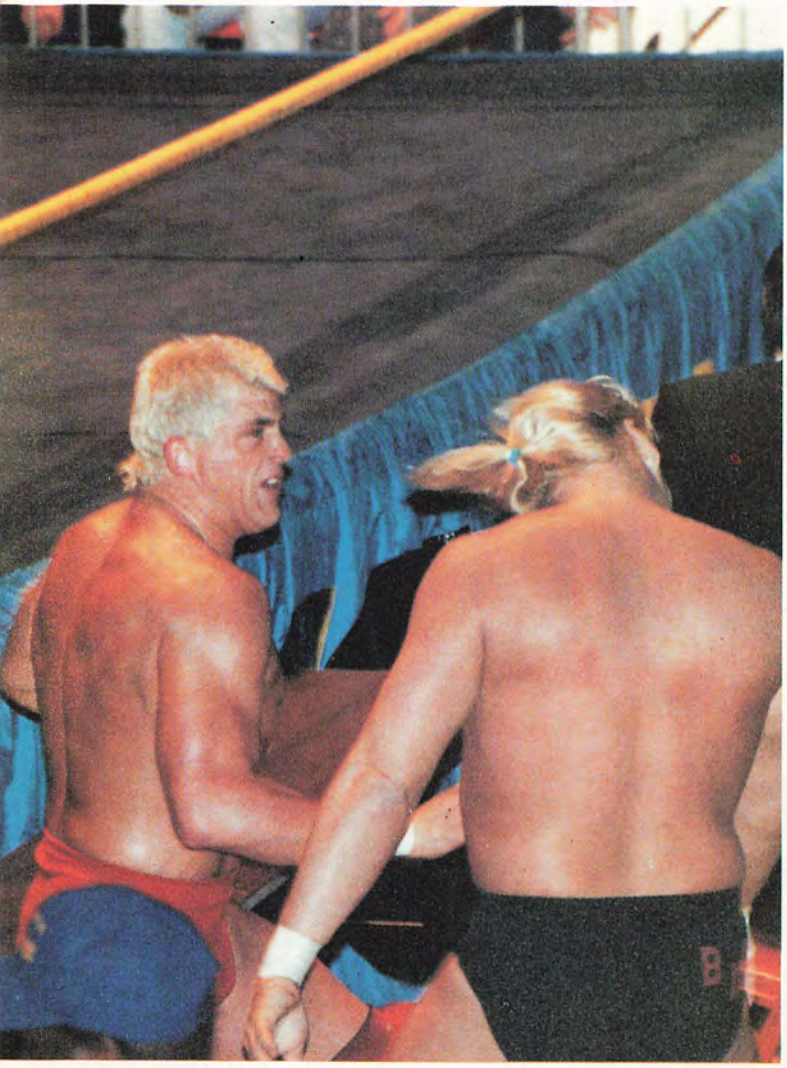
Besides worrying about Rude, Dustin is still feuding with Barry Windham.



Dustin has suffered numerous injuries this year, but has continued to wrestle.

But in 1993, Dusty Rhodes isn't an active wrestler (although rumors are he's coming out of retirement to wrestle The Assassin) and Dustin has pretty much been on his own for the past two years. Dustin has more than proven himself to be a top-caliber wrestler, he has become a major star and a force to be reckoned with, and since he is still a youngster, he will be a World champion before too long. The critics have stopped criticizing Dustin and have started to marvel at the awesome talents Rhodes has shown them.

In the two years since he has returned to WCW, he has really begun to shine. He has risen from mid-card status to a main event wrestler and he has been WCW World Tag Champion with Barry Windham and Ricky Steamboat and also U.S. Heavyweight Champion, the title he now holds. Unfortunately, there is some criticism regarding how he came to hold that belt, but it isn't from fans, it's from the ex-champion, "Ravishing" Rick Rude. Rude claims to be the "real" U.S. Champion, and has the U.S. title belt in



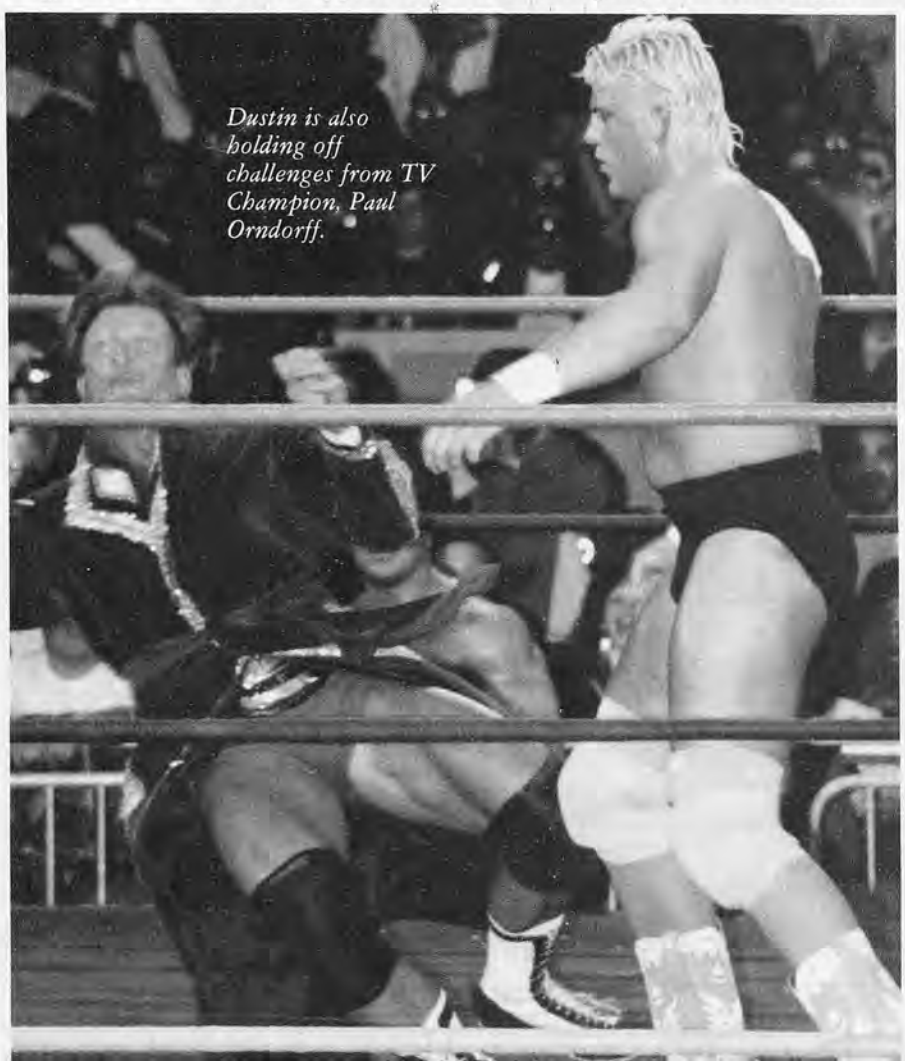
Rhodes is certainly a future World champion.

Windham and Rhodes are ex-world Tag Team Champions.

his possession. He claims never to have lost the belt in a match (true), but was stripped of it by a "corrupt" WCW management. After being stripped of the title, due to failure to defend it within thirty days because of an injury, Rude watched helplessly as a tournament was held to name a new champion. That tournament was sanctioned by the WCW and won by Dustin Rhodes, therefore Rhodes, not Rude, is the U.S. Heavyweight Champion today. As soon as Rude was able to wrestle again, he came back—belt in hand—and challenged Dustin Rhodes to a U.S. Title match, a match where Rude would put up the title belt against the title. WCW went to court and got an injunction against Rude which demanded that he return the belt to its rightful owner (that being WCW), but he has ignored the court order, hiring two bodyguards to protect him and the belt from legal action.

Rude does interviews saying possession is 9/10s of the law, and since he has possession of the belt, he is the "real" U.S. Champion. He also is threatening legal action against WCW to correct an "injustice". Another lawsuit certainly isn't what wrestling needs right now, so WCW is doing its best to get the two men into the ring against each other. Rhodes, for his part, is very willing to settle this in the ring, but despite his outward appearances and boasting, Rude isn't very eager to sign on the dotted line. Perhaps deep inside "Ravishing" Rick Rude knows he can't beat Dustin Rhodes in a face-to-face matchup, and seeing that he couldn't psych out his opponent now has no advantage left against him.

So, Rick Rude carries around a valise which carries inside it ten pounds of Gold that he has no claim to. It is unfortunate that Rude got injured when he did and was unable to defend his title, but it is not as if he didn't know the WCW's by-laws. This instance was not the first time anyone was stripped of a title belt for failing to defend it within thirty days. About two years ago, Rick and Scott Steiner had to relinquish the WCW World Tag Titles. They did so, then, being professionals, fought their way back to the championship when Scott got healthy again. Rude, that is what professional wrestling is all about—being **professional**. Dustin Rhodes is a professional, he fought through the adversity of being Dusty Rhodes' son and became a top star in the sport. You, too, should do the professional thing and give him the title belt he earned in the ring, instead of being a crybaby. Then, if you truly think you are the U.S. Champion, you will do the professional thing and enter the ring and beat Rhodes, fair and square. Until then Mr. Rude, you are no champion, and never will be! ■



Dustin is also holding off challenges from TV Champion, Paul Orndorff.

Lady X defends her World Singles Championship against Terri Power. The Glamour Girls (Lei Lani Kai and Judy Martin) defend their World Tag Team Championship against the combination of Bambi and Malia Hosaka. For the LPWA/Japan title watch from the USA: Reggie Bennett, Susan Green, Denise Storm vs. Harley Saito, Midori Saito, Eagle Sawai, Mizuki Endoh, Yukari Osawa. Much more!!! (140 min.)

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OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

PHOTO BY JO ELLEN HALLMARK

Jim Cornette's mystery tag team in the SMW is The Bruise Brothers, Ron and Don Harris.

WRESTLING'S TOP TWENTY (as of 6/17/93)

1. **Yokozuna** WWF World Champion
2. **"Big" Van Vader** WCW World Champion
3. **Hulk Hogan** #1 contender WWF Title
4. **Barry Windham** NWA World Champion
5. **Bret Hart** #2 contender WWF Title
6. **Sting** #1 contender WCW Title
7. **The Great Muta** IWGP World Champion
8. **Dustin Rhodes** WCW U.S. Champion
9. **Shawn Michaels** WWF Inter-Continental Champion
10. **Ric Flair** #1 contender NWA Title
11. **Ron Simmons** #2 contender WCW Title
12. **Curt Hennig** #1 contender WWF I-C Title
13. **Lex Luger** #3 contender WWF Title
14. **The Undertaker** #4 contender WWF Title
15. **Masa Chono** #1 contender IWGP Title
16. **Mitsuharu Misawa** All-Japan Triple Crown Champion
17. **Paul Orndorff** WCW World TV Champion
18. **"Ravishing" Rick Rude** #1 contender U.S. Title
19. **Sid Vicious** #3 contender WCW Title
20. **Papa Shango** USWA World Champion

TAG TEAMS

1. **Steve Williams & Terry Gordy** World's Toughest Tag Team
2. **The Steiner Brothers** WWF World Champions
3. **Steve Austin & Brian Pillman** WCW/NWA World Champions
4. **Money, Inc.** #1 contenders WWF Title
5. **The Hell Raisers** IWGP World Champions
6. **Rex King & Steve Doll** USWA World Champions
7. **The Rock 'N' Roll Express** SMW Tag Team Champions
8. **The Bruise Brothers** #1 contenders SMW Title
9. **Jerry Lawler & Jeff Jarrett** #1 contenders USWA Title
10. **Hulk Hogan & Brutus Beefcake** #2 contenders WWF Title

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

YOKOZUNA

"BIG" VAN VADER

BARRY WINDHAM

WWF
World Champion: Yokozuna
1. Shawn Michaels
2. Hulk Hogan
3. Bret Hart
4. Curt Hennig
5. Lex Luger
6. The Undertaker
7. Bam Bam Bigelow
8. Giant Gonzales
9. Randy Savage
10. Tatanka

WCW
World Champion: "Big" Van Vader
1. Dustin Rhodes
2. Paul Orndorff
3. Barry Windham
4. Sting
5. Ron Simmons
6. "Ravishing" Rick Rude
7. Sid Vicious
8. Arn Anderson
9. Davey Boy Smith
10. Ricky Steamboat

USWA
World Champion: Papa Shango
1. Brian Christopher
2. Jerry Lawler
3. Jeff Jarrett
4. Danny Davis
5. Master of Terror
6. Rock 'N' Roll Phantom
7. C.W. Bergstrom
8. Koko B. Ware
9. J.C. Ice
10. Wolfie D.

NWA
World Champion: Barry Windham
1. Ric Flair
2. The Great Muta
3. Masa Chono
4. Arn Anderson
5. Terry Funk
6. Road Warrior Hawk
7. Hiroshi Hase
8. Ricky Steamboat
9. Tracy Smothers
10. Bobby Eaton

TRACY SMOTHERS

MADUSA MICELI

STING

SMOKY MOUNTAIN
Champion: Tracy Smothers
1. Bobby Blaze
2. The Dirty White Boy
3. Brian Lee
4. Tim Horner
5. Kevin Sullivan
6. Dutch Mantell
7. The Tazmaniac
8. Killer Kyle
9. Jimmy Golden
10. Chris Candito

WOMEN
1. Madusa Miceli
2. Misty Blue
3. Luna Vachon
4. Bambi
5. Heidi Lee Morgan
6. Peggy Lee Leather
7. Monster Ripper
8. Sensational Sherri
9. Miss Texas
10. Candi Divine

MOST HATED
1. "Big" Van Vader
2. Yokozuna
3. Barry Windham
4. Shawn Michaels
5. Lex Luger
6. Razor Ramon
7. Brian Christopher
8. Kevin Sullivan
9. The Dirty White Boy
10. Brian Pillman

MOST POPULAR
1. Sting
2. Hulk Hogan
3. The Undertaker
4. Bret Hart
5. Arn Anderson
6. Ricky Steamboat
7. Jeff Jarrett
8. Dustin Rhodes
9. Curt Hennig
10. Ric Flair

THE LAST PAGE

The final word this month from WRESTLING'S MAIN EVENT!

Resurgence of the Ladies Wrestling: Another second coming?

By MICHAEL BRADY

The Golden Days of ladies wrestling are behind us. Gone from the ring are the likes of June Byers, Mildred Burke, Vivian Vachon and The Fabulous Moolah. These women were the cream of the crop of the "old-timers" and on any given day could even whip some of their top male counterparts.

For years wrestling promoters have tried to recapture the glory and excitement of ladies wrestling, only to be caught short by lack of enthusiasm. Even the World Wrestling Federation tried during the early 1980s with Wendi Richter and the Rock 'N' Wrestling Connection, only to toss it aside and concentrate on the more lucrative market of men's wrestling.

The Ladies International Wrestling Association (LIWA) holds annual events in Las Vegas at Bally's Hotel and Casino, but mainly features the "old-timers". Even with the popularity of ladies wrestling in Japan (see "Letter from Japan" on page 28), all-girl wrestling shows in the U.S. have faltered at best.

By the end of 1992, there were only two U.S. organizations specializing in ladies professional wrestling: the Ladies Professional Wrestling Association (LPWA) and Ladies Major League Wrestling (LMLW). Now there is one. LPWA went belly up and LMLW has been on its last leg, refusing to falter. Even LMLW's number one star, Luna Vachon, traded in her Wild Women of Wrestling (WWOW) title for the shot to make it with the WWF.

But LMLW is taking a brazen step toward trying to succeed, despite the odds. They're now in the midst of taking their WWOW show on the road and on August 28th, will penetrate their first major market outside their Florida base, by holding two shows at Cherry Hill, New Jersey's Garden State Racetrack, just minutes from Philadelphia.

Will they be as well-received in the North as they are in the South? Who knows? But if it catches on...

In Florida, LMLW has presented WWOW shows in Key West, Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Tampa, West Palm Beach and several smaller towns with much success. In fact, except for the WWF, they have outdrawn all other promotions in Florida, including World Championship Wrestling (WCW)—pay-per-views and other major cards not included.

Bambi will be defending her WWOW World Title for the 1st time in the Northeast on August 28th.

PHOTO BY STEVE STOGDALE

Their stable of wrestlers to date has been strong: LMLW Champion Bambi; Peggy Lee Leather; Florida Champion Penelope Paradise; Malia Hosaka; Hott Chocolate; Candi Divine; Leilani Kai; Judy Martin; Susan Green; Lady X; Senorita con la Mascara and Wendi Richter.

Add to the mix such Northern staples as Heidi Lee Morgan; Rustee "the Foxx" Thomas; Misty Blue Simmes and The Nasty Girls (Linda Dallas and Kat LaRoux), and you've got one heck of a show.

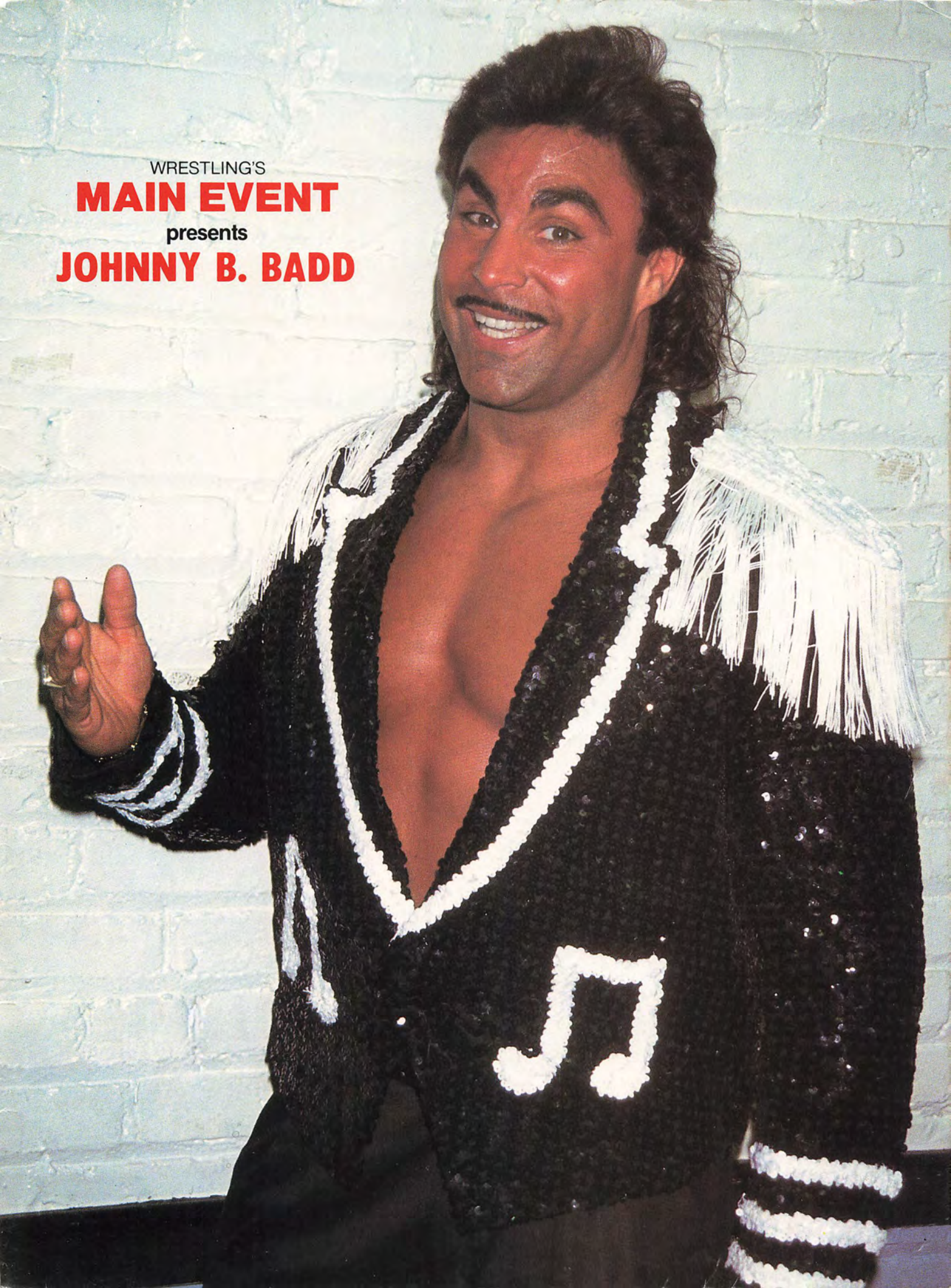
The question is though: Will there be a demand for a return appearance? The promoters hope so, that's why they are bringing their show to a wrestling hotbed—Philadelphia, home of some of the greatest fans in the world. Fans in the Northeast deserve more from wrestling promotions than what they are getting. The LMLW thinks it has just what wrestling fans need—good, hard action! ■

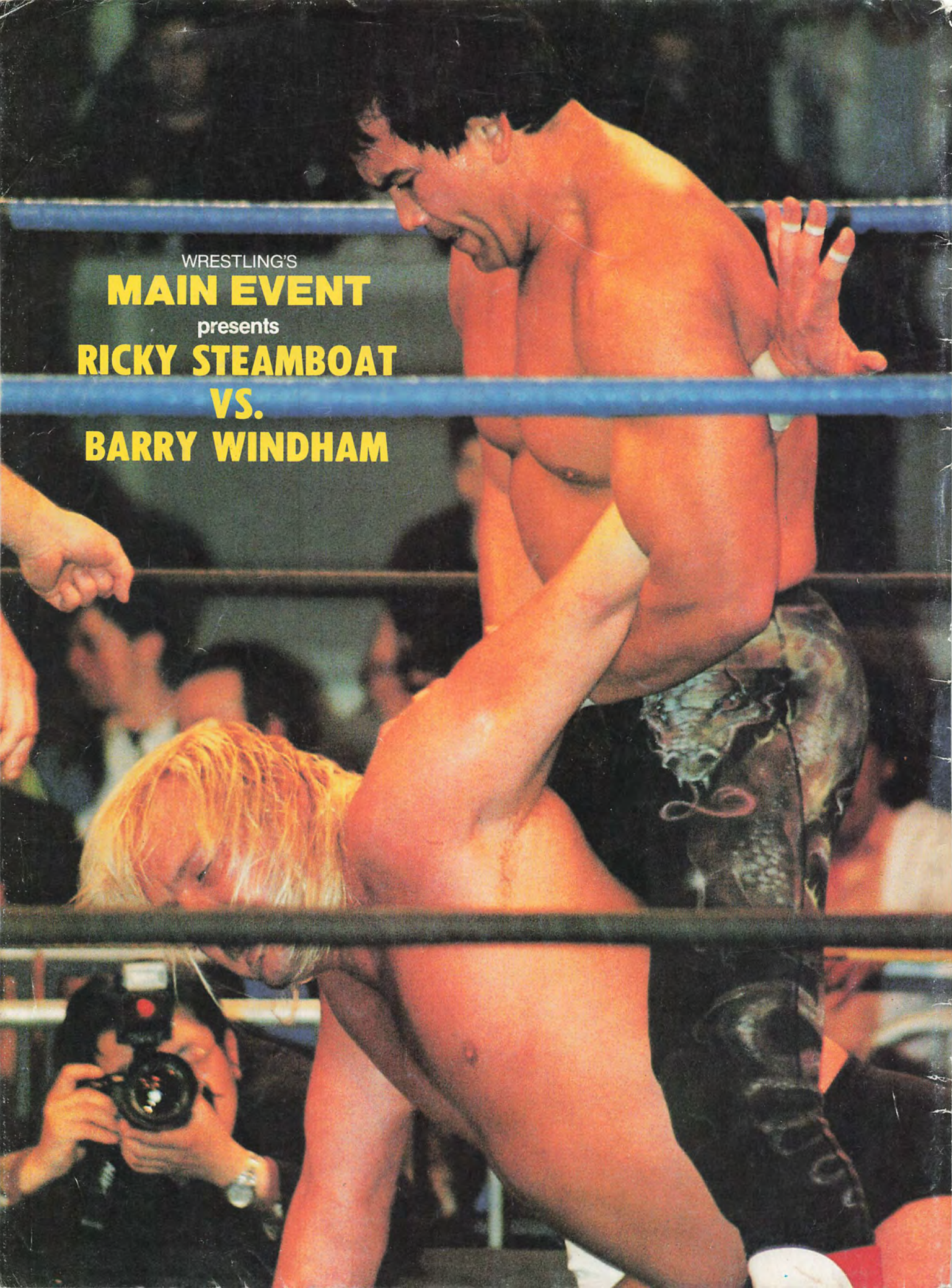
WRESTLING'S

MAIN EVENT

presents

JOHNNY B. BADD




WRESTLING'S
MAIN EVENT
presents
RICKY STEAMBOAT
VS.
BARRY WINDHAM